GAINS AND LOSSES – A DECADE OF CHINA/UNICEF CO-OPERATION IN IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

A Case-Study of an Equal Partnership in Aid Relationships

By

LIU, Jian

THESIS

Submitted to
School of Public Policy and Management
Korea Development Institute
in partial fulfillment of the requirement
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ABSTRACT

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As the world becomes increasingly globalized, there have been more and more co-operative programs between countries and organizations. But it is common that some of these international cooperative projects have eventually turned out to be unsuccessful. What are the reasons? This paper argues that an equal partnership between cooperators is, if not the most, one of the crucially important elements to achieve positive outcomes, through a case study of China/UNICEF co-operation in in-service teacher training (ISTT) project implemented in the People's Republic of China, from 1982 up to the present. It addresses the issue of gains and losses entailed in this project, examines the overall partnership between China and UNICEF and its effects on project characteristics and interactions, success and development and conclude that once partnership between donor and recipient in aid relationship is more equal, their cooperation could be more constructive and productive. This should be the final goal of aid in its historical mission.

Taking the ISTT project as a case-study of co-operation between China and UNICEF, this study represents an in-depth reflection on my close observation, grounded by analysis of project documents, implementation processes and interview data of six project actors from both Chinese and UNICEF sides. UNICEF assistance can provide vital educational inputs in terms of both ideas and funds, particularly when fully supported by strong internal inputs in the same terms and the overall educational policy. A large developing nation-state like China, its extensive partnership with UNICEF is a unique occurrence, but is one that has an exemplary role and impact for other developing countries.

The challenge to international aid provision is that development is ultimately the responsibility of recipients. Any type of initiative for change and improvement must come from the commitments, thoughts and efforts of the recipient itself. Only after these happen can the recipient ultimately become independent of aid.

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For Ong Ai Sian, with love and appreciation

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACWF	All Chinese Women's Federation
BEPPAs	Basic Education Program for Poor Areas
CCIER	China Central Institute for Educational Research
CET	China Education TV
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EFA	Education for All
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISTT	In-service Teacher Training
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOFTEC	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OERD	Outline of Educational Reform and Development
PPAs	Project Plans of Actions
SEC	State Education Commission
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations for Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations for Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organizations
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WB	World Bank
WDEFA	World Declaration on Education for All

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

1.1 Aims of the Thesis

Why are some major cooperative programs between the Cambodian government and the donor community unsuccessful? For example, a number of donor agencies have simultaneously stepped in Cambodia to conduct their movement against HIV/AIDS without proper planning and coordination. Such disorganization and poor coordination between the donors and the Cambodian government and among the donors have caused complaints from the Cambodian government about the donors' ignorance of its real needs and unnecessary wastage of aid resources. Another case is the donors' interference in how Cambodian Mines Advisory Centre (CMAC) conducting mine clearance. Whenever there are problems in the program, the donors criticize the Cambodian government and threaten to stop funding to CMAC. As the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen puts it, "It seems that only the Cambodians in CMAC have been blamed… we are always the one to receive the blame."[1] Surely there have various reasons, but the most obvious one in my opinion is that the absence of an equal

[1] See Respect our Sovereignty in ASIAWEEK, Nov. 26, 1999, Vol. 25, No. 47 for more details.

partnership between the Cambodian government and the donors is mainly responsible for the disappointed outcomes of their cooperative projects.

The purpose of this thesis is to display the importance of an equal partnership in aid relationship, through a case study on the People's Republic of China (China)/United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) cooperative project in in-service teacher training (ISTT), which has been regarded as a success. This paper addresses, based on analysis of the project documents, the development processes and a limited number of interviews, the issue of the nature of gains and losses entailed in the ISTT project and concentrates on concerns and interests in an equal partnership and its effects on the project characteristics and interactions, success and development. It concludes that **once partnership between donor and recipient in aid relationship is more equal and fairer, co-operation could be more constructive and productive**, with aid recipient ultimately becoming independent and sustainable. This should be the final goal of aid in its historical mission.

An equal partnership based on respect, trust and understanding, is the cornerstone in aid relationship. Should the partnership be lopsided with donor insisting on imposing its ways of doing things with no consideration of the societal conditions and actual needs to achieve its hidden agenda, recipient will not make commitment to

the cooperative project. Likewise, if recipient only has intention of making use of the resources provided by donor with no commitment to the cooperative project, it is unlikely that the project objectives will be achieved.

In the case of the China/UNICEF ISTT project, UNICEF has placed importance to China's societal conditions and actual needs while China, in appreciation of UNICEF's understanding, is more heedful of ideas, advice and proposals from UNICEF. Both China and UNICEF started the ISTT project on an equal footing in terms of power in policy-making, implementation and development of the project. The ISTT project has so far produced desirable outcomes and achieved the objectives. This assessment was made based on a judgment upon the project evaluation reports and reflection on the interview data and my own limited working experience in the project.

Such cordial cooperative mood has its distinctive feature which certainly can serve as an exemplary model for other international cooperative programs. I believe that UNICEF's willingness to take into consideration of China's societal development is due to the fact that China is a huge developing country with the largest population in the world. Only the success of the cooperative project between UNICEF and such a large country can be considered truly representative and significant.

The striking evidence that the ISTT project has been regarded as a success is that China has set up its nationwide teacher-training network with 163 project-participating schools/centers as key training institutions and enlarged its training capacity through the project, which are the major goals mutually set by both sides. Up to 1998, there were approximately 2 million or one fifth of China's total teachers in basic education who had received pre- and in-service training and become qualified and updated in accordance with the qualifications set by the Chinese government. These teachers are now better equipped with knowledge and skills for classroom teaching and only when teachers are well equipped to carry out their roles and responsibilities in classrooms will the needs of education be met. Before the ISTT project, most of the teachers, especially those in the less developed areas, were mainly recruited to fill up the teaching vacancies. Such arrangement has resulted in poor teaching quality which has critically defeated the purpose of education as the level of academic performance of students will remain stagnant. The project itself and its success undoubtedly have widespread impact on China's teacher education and its whole educational system as well.

Of course there are some constraints in the ISTT project too. One major problem lies with the centralized system of the project administration. The training

schools/centers have limited autonomy, and the project administration is, to some extent, still in the hand of the Ministry of Education (MOE) of China.[2] Such limitation has impeded the developments of the training schools/centers, as they are not given the flexibility over programs and controls over resources for further improvement. Another shortcoming is the implementation structure. The lack of horizontal interaction between the training institutions has made it difficult for sharing of experience and exchange of information, which could have a greater impact on the teaching training as better ideas can be tapped to spearhead improvements.

The fact that little availability of systematic study on gains and losses after more than a decade of co-operation between China and the United Nations (UN) in educational field and my job experience in coordinating international educational programs in MOE have prompted me to conduct this study on the ISTT project with focus on UNICEF's evolving educational policies in general and in teacher training in particular and their underlying impact on the teacher education development in China. What motivates me more is my hope that this exploration could evoke a clearer recognition of the pursuit of more constructive and productive aid and partner

[2] The Ministry of Education of China (MOE) was changed into the State Education Commission (SEC) in 1990 which was again renamed MOE in 1998.

relationship between governments and agencies and between developed and less developed regions within China.

The role of teacher education in overall educational development has been constantly discussed and repeatedly prioritized by many agencies and educators. Its particular importance to China lies in the fact that Chinese teachers form the largest teaching force in the world.[3] The total number of teachers at different levels reached approximately 20 million in 1999, and they were responsible for teaching over 200 million students of different grades.[4] The Chinese government has always attached a great importance to teacher education.[5] The National Conference on Teacher Education held in 1996 reinforced a consensus that teacher education had a strategic importance to improve the quality of the whole nation and to attain sustainable social-and-economic development in China. Therefore, it was emphasized again on the Conference that a great priority should be given to teacher education.[6] This explains why teacher education has always been a focal point in China/UNICEF educational co-operation and

[3] Lewin, K., Xu, H., Little, A., and Zheng, J. W., (1994) Educational Innovation in China: Tracing the Impact of the 1985 Reforms, Essex: Longman, p. 100.

[4] MOE, (1999) Essential Statistics of Education in China, Beijing: People's Education Press, p. 4.

[5] The World Bank, (1987) China: Problems and Strategies in Long-term Development, Beijing: Financial and Economic Press, p. 3.

[6] Liu, B., (1996) "Our Urgent Task: Forming a Qualified Teaching Force", an opening Speech at the National Conference on Teacher Education, Beijing. Liu, B. was then the vice minister of education in charge of basic education from 1986 to 1999.

could also ground the hypothesis that teacher education would continue to become one of the essential components in further pursuit of the Chinese government in international co-operation. My intention is that this exploration would benefit, to a certain extent, such co-operation.

1.2 Introduction to the ISTT Project

The ISTT project is an initiative of the Chinese government and UNICEF mainly for training in-service pre-school, primary and secondary school and special education teachers, which has been implemented in five different cycles from 1982 to 2000. Nationally coordinated by the department of foreign affairs and directed by the department of teacher education of MOE, it has been executed by the respective educational authorities at different levels.

The 1st cycle of the project is regarded as a pilot one targeting at promotion of development of 9 teacher-training schools/centers in remote and minority areas and 8 pre-school departments of normal universities in China.[7] Different from the 1st cycle, the other 4 cycles consist of the same sub-projects: primary school teacher training, special education teacher training and pre-school teacher training. The specific

[7] China/UNICEF, (1982) The Project Agreement on In-service Teacher Training in Minority Areas, Beijing: Ministry of Education.

objectives of each cycle, however, are different (difference in strategy changes and characteristics in development processes of each cycle will be discussed in details at later stage). But generally, set within China's national policy of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 1990 and 9-year compulsory education by 2000, the objectives of the project in general are "to develop more effective teacher-training activities able to strengthen the competence of teacher-training schools in training teachers primarily for minority, remote and poverty areas, and to meet the requirements set forth in government standards and regulations".[8]

All these are to be achieved starting from establishing practical individual model training schools/centers and ending up with formulating a nationwide training network, with US$ 264 million input by UNICEF and three times of that input by the Chinese government at different levels to coordinate and promote the initiative in the ISTT.[9]

The project of each cycle has strategies pursued to achieve its objectives. The strategies have been changed according to the changed focal points of each cycle. Starting from the project schools/centers selection, faculty upgrading through training,

[8] Ibid.; UNICEF, (1982) Plan for the Enhancement of Primary Schools Teachers In-service Training: UNICEF Office for China Review of the Proposed, New York: UNICEF; (1985) Project Plan of Action/GR. 84/III/003, Beijing; (1990) Project Plan of Action/E64/E32, Beijing; (1995) Project Plan of Action/E64/05, Beijing; (1996) Project Plan of Action/E03/59, Beijing.

[9] Ibid.

supplies of teaching equipment to each model school/center, different strategies have been adopted to strengthen the organization of the nationwide network of schools and sub-centers to facilitate awareness about the importance of universalizing basic education through the in-service teacher training.

Various training activities in different sub-projects aim to upgrade teacher performance at different levels and particularly in rural, minority and mountainous areas, through enhancing learning content, making it more relevant to the health, nutrition and occupational needs of learners, focusing on methodology and promoting material production, applied research and experience exchanges. Various formats have been introduced with long-term training ranging from 6 months to 1 year, and short-term training from 1 week to 1 month. Different approaches have been employed, varying from on-campus courses in the UNICEF-assisted schools/centers, to the extensive use of distance education program with periodic face-to-face tutoring.

The project schools/centers have been identified, initially on a small scale and at provincial level, and then expanded down to municipal and county levels. Each project school/center is promoted to select and assist 3 to 4 non-project schools/centers from totally 300 to 400 disadvantaged, remote, mountainous counties to upgrade teacher qualifications through the above-mentioned approaches. This kind of assistance

continues to the subsequent cycle. Up to now, there are totally 163 project schools/centers nationwide, of them, 131 are located in the less developed areas. All of the schools/centers have established links with 500 poor counties by assisting them in upgrading teachers' performance through the in-service training.

There is a bi-annual meeting of the project school/center principals, sponsored by UNICEF, to exchange experience in implementation of project activities. There are also UNICEF-assisted seminars on special subjects and on production of audio-visual and distance-education materials and maintenance of audio-visual equipment. Furthermore, some study tours and training workshops for the backbone project officers and faculty are sponsored by UNICEF and organized by MOE. These activities are conducted either in or outside China.

Based on the school and provincial project actors' 6-monthly reports, the project director-general prepares an annual report before the annual review meeting is held in late September/early October. This is a review jointly conducted by UNICEF, MOE, and the country program representative, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation (MOFTEC). The evaluation report is usually produced by internal consultants who are chosen and sponsored by UNICEF.

1.3 A Form of Case Study Based on Reflection

As a practitioner who used to be partially engaged in the project activities, prior to starting this research, I aim my study at exploring the general nature of gains and losses by conducting a type of policy inquiry and project evaluation, one approach to practical inquiry. Therefore, based on the documentation and other evidences available,[10] I am simply concentrating on strategic changes and implementation processes without analyzing the sort of issues that suggested equal interaction. I attempt to read between the lines and find my study not only around the general nature of gains and losses but also a little more focused on an inquiry around an instance of equal partnership.

Having framed the scope of this survey, I shift from general analysis of gains and losses to a case study of an "instance." Although lying behind the "instance" lurks problems concerning the relationship of the "instance" to the "class" from which it is drawn,[11] this study transcends the principle of selection and becomes a case study identifying the unique features of interaction within the case, and showing how the features affect the implementation of systems and influence the way the projects are

[10] See Appendix II.

[11] Adelmen, C., Jenkins, D. and Kemmis, S., (1976) "Re-thinking Case Study: Notes from the 2nd Cambridge Conference" in Cambridge Journal of Education, Vol. 6, pp. 139-150.

implemented. The purpose of this study is to use the instance as a means to identify the key issue that merits further study.

An observer in a case study has to be selective but his/her selectivity is not normally kept in checks that can be applied in rigorously systematic inquiries and, therefore, tends to be personal and subjective.[12] So "organic" intellectuals have called for more "dialogical" style of inquiry, or the use of "crossing-checking" in finding from one interview with those of another, or checking interview against documents and vice versa. In this way, it is possible to achieve a degree of objectivity by bringing bias out into the open.[13]

Recognizing the fact that imparting of information involves in reflection process, of which the corollary in the requirement for new information or the discussion of perspectives, critical interviewers actively engage in dialogue. Understanding that all cases are uniquely embedded in their real world situations, case-study research offers a surrogate experience and invites readers to underwrite the account, by appealing to his tacit knowledge of human situation.[14]

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[12] Nisbet, J. and Watt, J., (1982) Re-guide 26: Case Study England, Nottingham University, School of Education, p. 7.

[13] Ibid., p. 6.

[14] Adelmen, C., Jenkins, D. and Kemmis, S., (1976) Re-thinking Case Study: Notes from the 2nd Cambridge Conference in Cambridge Journal of Education, Vol. 6, p. 143.

1.4 Analysis of Policy and Project Documents

In an attempt to identify the nature of partnership as well as other natures of gains and losses to China/UNICEF co-operation in teacher training, in addition to an analysis on interview data, an analysis on policy-making and project documents formulation process is also premise on which this study is conducted. Prior to starting this survey, my previous working experience in some joint-projects with other UN agencies such as United Nations for Development Program (UNDP) and United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) in terms of decision-making process let me assume that the project documents of the ISTT project are a result of “joint-effort”, in which, Chinese priorities are echoed and reinforced. Therefore, I concentrate on the analysis of the draft project proposals worked out by the government, based on which, the project documents of each cycle have been formulated. Furthermore, my research on some memorandums allows me to assume the degree of the equal interaction between China and UNICEF outlined in these documents. These documents, however, have their limitations, with no direct contribution of any external participants in the process of their formulation. My understanding, therefore, is based on my limited experience in the planning process or on the interpretations of the perceptions of all these involved in the process.

Based on this understanding, I examine the objectives, strategies, project school selections and project activities to determine how the documents are interpreted, who are most decisive in the process, whether UNICEF is always responsive to the priorities of the Chinese government. Having constructed a relatively clearer image of the interactive perception, I analyze mid-term and final evaluation reports of each cycle, identifying the issue of how the project has been evaluated, and who have been the main practitioners and beneficiaries.

1.5 Analysis of Interview Data

I interviewed 6 junior and senior project officers from both sides of China and UNICEF from December of 1999 to March of 2000 in Beijing, on face-to-face base and through e-mails.[15] As research process has in itself been a personal awakening to the issues, rather than a mature expression of their implications,[16] I adopted a traditional interpretive methodology. I designed a semi-structured interview schedule.[17] But I found in the 1st draft of the interview questions some redundancies - some carried the

[15] See Appendix I, IV.

[16] Page, E., (1997) In Search of Authentic Voice: An Ethnography of Aid Relationships, a dissertation of Master of Arts in Education and International Development, Institute of London, University of London, unpublished, p. 28.

[17] See Appendix III.

same meanings, although they were raised from different angles. I did not realize this until I made a pilot interview. So I redrafted the schedule in March in Beijing.

Without making any over-bold claims or inferences from my interview data, I have chosen *an opportunity sample*, which makes me feel fortunate to have found that all the main previous Chinese project actors are accessible to me: 3 of the 4 are now in Beijing and the other is in London, with whom I manage to have interview through e-mails. To ascertain my premature interpretation of the issue in equal interaction, I feel that it is significant to quote as many Chinese responses as possible, although such kind of studies tend to contain considerable comments rather than direct quotations. As far as the analysis on the general nature of gains and losses is concerned, it is also extremely important to let the respondents' voice be directly heard.

Interview is usually regarded as a highly subjective technique.[18] This could probably underscore one of the essential limitations of interview data. I have been partially integrated into this project and on a very good term with all my interviewees, both on the Chinese and UNICEF sides.

What is even worse is that it has turned out to be "elite dominance" in the interviews: all the respondents are the officials from MOE and UNICEF. Although I am

[18] Bell, J., (1993) Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-time Researchers in Education and Social Science, Buckingham: Open University Press, p. 91.

keen to interview as many as grass-root project actors back in China, to gain some understandings of their perceptions, considering fund and time limits, I have to give up the desire.

I had access to only 2 senior UNICEF actors. One used to be and the other is still involved in the project. Thus, the proportion of UNICEF to Chinese officers interviewed is a little out of balance in terms of number. But as far as the project is concerned, they are the only two key persons who have been directly engaged in the projects from the early 1980s, when UNICEF started to work with the Chinese government in the field of education. Therefore, they probably know the project best and their views are generally representative of a consensus of UNICEF's opinion.

The real problem in the interview with UNICEF actors, however, is that I mainly did it with them through e-mails, in which I played a relatively passive role: I sent them my interview schedule before they returned their responses through e-mails as well. This saved me from striking a balance between friendliness and objectiveness as I had experienced in the face-to-face interviews with the Chinese respondents, since I was also familiar with them. But interview via e-mail had an "open" style with little structure in the process, in which I had simply become a passive receiver of their responses to my questions.

1.6 Analysis of Secondary Sources

In addition to the primary sources, it is equally important to amass quantities of secondary sources, including both formal and informal ones. In order to achieve a greater degree of objectivity in the study of equal nature of discourse, all the primary and secondary sources need to be checked against each other to enable triangulation of observations and final assessments.

Working in the department of foreign affairs in the then SEC and now MOE has provided me with access to a certain degree of understanding equal partnership in cooperation between the Chinese government and UNICEF in the field of education. Relevant publications of both UNICEF and the Chinese government available have been examined, which yield significant and basic data.

It should be acknowledged that, first of all, this kind of study has limitations. One of limitations is that prior to starting this dissertation, I searched through all the evaluation reports on files, but most of them were written by either the UNICEF staff or the internal consultants sponsored by UNICEF. It inevitably reflected either UNICEF's or China's view on the projects.

Secondly, literature on UNICEF investment in China is scarce, scattered or

tended to rest in the files. Published sources serve several purposes including public accountability and more special assessment usage. There is temptation to put a good face on available data. This again explains the reason for necessitating this study, but constitutes an impediment to the more overall exploration in it.

Finally, operational constraints prevents me from having access to those related documents held in UNICEF headquarters in New York, which are not available on loan or through electronic media. As far as the projects are concerned, this could be compensated, to a certain extent, by my individual experience and reflection, which are grounded in the analysis of interview data and key project documents and processes. But still, they constitute a big shame that leads to this study open for further investigation.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This paper is organized as follows: in Chapter Two, I overview the issues of development, educational quality and debates on aid, as reflected in the literature, identifying different views of development, education and aid, followed by a policy-level application of debates to China. Chapter Three overviews the development process of the ISTT project activities and the objectives of different cycles. Chapter Four

analyzes interview responses from both sides on the gains and losses in the ISTT project. In the conclusion chapter, Chapter Five, I reinforce my argument put forward in the beginning of this paper by summarizing what I have found and outlining the changes essential to the pursuit of constructive and productive aid relationship in governmental and regional co-operation both in and outside China.

CHAPTER TWO

DEBATES ON AID, EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

The aim of this chapter is to analyze the complex issues in aid and educational quality of different dimensions. Consisting of 5 sections, this chapter discusses, in the 1st section, 2 marked controversies in terms of supportive and oppressive views of aid efforts. The 2nd section reveals various paradigms of quality education put forward by agencies and educators. This is followed by debates on the development of qualified teachers, which are closely related to the development of educational quality. The 4th section is to locate China in relation to the debates and different paradigms. As one of the largest developing countries, China's demographic and geographic size and strategic position determine the nature of mutual-benefit relationship in aid practice. It's absorption of aid as "seed" rather than "pillar" catalyzes its national modernization drive over the past decade or so.[19] It is concluded in the 5th section that the Chinese experience in aid absorption, turning out to be short but representative, could add

[19] Wang, C. M. (1997) China and the World Bank – Investment in Human Resources Development, a dissertation of Master of Arts in Education and Human Resources Development, Sydney University, unpublished, p. 80.

considerably to these debates.

2.1 Debates on Aid

2.1.1 Aid as Oppressive and Negative

The word “aid ” is used to refer to “transfer of resources from governments or public institutions of richer countries to governments in the Third World”,[20] or “gifts and concessional loans of economic resources, such as finance and technology, employed for economic purpose provided to less developed countries by governments of the developed democracies, directly or through intermediaries such as UN programs and multilateral development banks.”[21]

During the 1970s it became a tendency, that a quarter of the official aid came from the international agencies. The remaining was “bilateral” aid, or aid directly from one government to another.[22] Although aid is usually proceeded based on the negotiations between the governments providing and receiving assistance, still, “slightly more than half of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members’ aid is tied, which means it must be spent on importing goods and services from the countries

[20] Hayter, T. and Watson, C., (1985) Aid: Rhetoric and Reality, London and Sydney: Pluto Press, p. 6.

[21] Lumsdaine, D. (1993) Moral Vision in International Politics: The Foreign Aid Regime, 1949-1989, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 33.

[22] Ibid., p. 40.

providing it".[23] Consequently, this tying of aid has been used as a means to ensure that the recipient governments become dependent for their survival and continuation on aid. Once a country is "hooked" on aid, its economy becomes oriented towards foreign trade, and it needs loans to service old ones. In Hayter and Watson's view, therefore, aid is to the benefit of the donors: aid is used to open up markets, to finance projects, which are essential for the profitable operation of foreign investors. The threat of suspending aid is applied as a means of preventing those governments from adopting specific policies of which Western donors disapprove. Conclusively, aid is provided compatible with Western interests.[24] The incumbent Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen also expressed similar point of view when interviewed with a CNN correspondent last November.[25]

In donor community, voices raised against aid are obvious. Some people on the right oppose it because they believe that less developed countries will do well in a free market, and that aid only makes large government and dependence.[26]

2.1.2 Facilitative Arguments

[23] Hayter, T. and Watson, C., (1985) Aid: Rhetoric and Reality, London and Sydney: Pluto Press, p. 15.

[24] Ibid., pp. 242-244.

[25] For more details, see ASIAWEEK, Vol. 25, No. 47, 1999.

[26] Lumsdaine, D. (1993) Moral Vision in International Politics: The Foreign Aid Regime, 1949-1989, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 140; see also Burnell, P., (1997) Foreign Aid in a Changing World, Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press, p. 3.

However, there are some controversies about this view of the unidirectional-benefit and tying of aid. One school believes that the seemingly simple question "why is aid given" does not have simple answer. For most donors, an important rationale for aid is **humanitarian** with concern for responding to the needs of people in economically less fortunate countries,[27] as in those "low-income" (1980 per capita income below US$600), "lower middle-income"(between US$600 and US$1200), and "upper income"(above US$1200) countries defined by Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).[28]

This approach is vigorously reinforced by many politicians and scholars such as Buchert, who regards international aid as being provided based on a complex set of underlying economic, commercial, political, strategic, social and humanitarian motives. She argues that the relative dominance of each of the motives has varied over time both in terms of individual donor countries and in a more global sense, depending on changing national and international contexts and on the circumstances in individual countries in the developing countries.[29] Aid in these terms is a co-operative venture,

[27] Lumsdaine made a strong argument in favor of this rationale. For details, See Lumsdaine, D. (1993) Moral Vision in International Politics: The Foreign Aid Regime, 1949-1989, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

[28] Development Committee, (1986) Aid for Development: The Key Issues: Supporting Materials for Report of the Task Force on Confessional Flows, Washington D. C.: The World Bank.

[29] Buchert, L., (1995) Recent Trends in Education Aid: Towards a Classification of Policies, Paris:

through which aid recipients from an economic point of view, are able to increase their investment resources, ease the foreign exchange constraints, make specific, targeted contributions to particular sectors and regions through individual investments.

From the above 2 opposing views on the role of aid, in development, we can see that it is not the issue of whether aid could contribute but how to make aid contribute to the recipients' development and ultimate sustainability. To measure effectiveness of aid is not easy. The fundamental objectives of development would also compete with other political and commercial criteria.[30] Still, considering the increasing concerns and demands for development, it is time for both donors and recipients to ponder upon how to improve the provision and coordination of aid efforts.[31]

Having listed 5 essential conditions for effective aid, including ownership by government and participation by affected people; strong administrative and institutional capacity; sound policies and good public sector management; close coordination between both sides; and improvement in aid agencies' own business practices,[32] the WB

UNESCO: IIEP; see also Cassen, R. and Associates, (1994) Does Aid work?-Report to an Intergovernmental Task Force, Second Edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press, ch. 1, 3.

[30] The World Bank, (1995a) Strengthening the Effectiveness of Aid -Lessons for Donors, Washington D. C.: The World Bank.

[31] Cassen, R. and Associates, (1994) Does Aid work?-Report to an Intergovernmantal Task Force, Second Edition, Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 179-189.

[32] Ibid.

points out that these conditions exist to varying degrees in the recipient countries, but aid is more effective when they are combined.

It is worth noticing that, in the mid 1980s, when making a broad and overall evaluation of aid effectiveness, the first of its kind, Robert and Cassen emphasized the explicit policy-dialogue negotiations between donors and recipients, that could add effectiveness to aid. According to their analysis and prediction, policy dialogue would be a central feature of aid relationship for many years to come.[33] Far from pinpointing equal partnership in aid relationship, it could be clearly observed, however, that effective aid provision could only be realized with effective policy dialogue and interaction between donors and recipients, based on the formers' appropriate forms of policy advice and latter's capacity for analysis and dialogue. This also applies to aid provision in one of the representative social sector – education.

2.1.3 Educational Aid

Controversies about educational aid are as contrasting as those on aid. One argument is that some of the existing educational policies determined by the World Bank (WB) have become the foundation for international agency orthodoxy. These are

[33] Ibid., pp. 72-83.

most strongly expressed through the World Declaration on Education for All (WDEFA). The central tenets of this orthodoxy are summarized by King as "universal primary access and achievement in an accelerated time-scale; a costly undertaking which demands a heavy reliance on aid, the volume of which can, in turn, be reduced by countries adjusting their economies and education systems in line with neo-liberal thinking".[34]

Nonetheless, upholding Education for All (EFA) with a predominant concern about global poverty situation, a large number of agencies have redefined the central element of educational aid as to promote basic educational development. This is regarded as having an interrelationship with economic, political and social purpose, such as economic growth, protection of environment, popular participation and promoting human rights conditions.[35] As a part of poverty alleviation strategy and social economic development, educational efforts, based on the EFA, especially for children, have paid off in terms of school readiness, enrollment and attendance to school, children's health and nutrition approach in many aid recipients such as Peru, Jamaica,

[34] King, K.' (1991) Aid and Education in the Developing World: The Role of Donor Agencies in Educational Analysis, London: Longman.

[35] Buchert, L., (1996) "The Concept of Education for All—What Has Happened after Jomtien" in B. Brock-Utne and T. Nagel, (eds.), (1996) The Role of Aid in the Development of Education for All, Oslo: University of Oslo, pp. 73-96.

Argentina and Panama.[36]

Having retained its original tradition of action and advocacy for primary education and focus on the poor and disadvantaged people, UNICEF is identified as one of the best-known agencies for its initiative to the adjustment of the world with human force and to decrease "the potentially very serious consequences of stabilization, adjustment and debt repayment for the social sectors of many of the poorer countries".[37] This makes UNICEF different from other UN agencies in its conceptualization of quality education as the fulfillment of basic learning needs related to learning and life skills for every person, which is profoundly influential in many less developed countries.

2.1.4 China's Perspectives on Educational Aid

Starting from the early 1980s, after it had committed itself to an open modernization policy, China began its co-operation with the major multilateral agencies in education, including WB, UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF. China's entry into UNICEF came in 1980 and its membership gave it a broader and more public arena in which to voice its concerns and interests. Here it would gain financial support and policy advice

[36] Young, M. E., (1995) Investing in Young Children: the World Bank Discussion Papers, Washington D. C.: The World Bank, pp. 25-28.

[37] King, K., (1991) Aid and Education in the Developing World: The Role of Donor Agencies in Educational Analysis, London: Longman.

for its programs especially in primary education and health care. On the other hand, having China as a member could assist UNICEF in its role as a universal agency. This relationship helps the extent of internationalization of any UNICEF's initiative and, in the meantime, promotes the pace of China's interaction with the mainstream of world social and economic development that has been dominated by the West.

2.2 Quality Education

2.2.1 Economic-instrumental Orientations

As the largest donor agency which has an increasing influential role in shaping the educational policy agendas of governments in developing countries as well as the donor agencies, the World Bank's conceptualization of quality education is also profoundly influential. Primarily a financial institution, the Bank, from economic points of view, conceptualized the best quality education as the most cost-efficient and cost-effective, in terms of "meeting economies' growing demands for adaptable workers who can readily acquire new skills".[38] Giving great attention to learning and labor market outcomes, the Bank regards economic analysis in general and rates of return in

[38] The World Bank, (1995b) Strengthening the Effectiveness of Aid - Lessons for Donors, Washington, D. C.: The World Bank, p. 1.

particular as a diagnostic tool with which to start the process of setting priorities.[39]

Believing that all problems are simply challenges and are amenable to technical solutions, namely technicism-empiricism,[40] the Bank seeks to mend the world in most cost-effective way and to overcome all problems by applying the right technology. Thus, educational aid is justified as an investment in human capital and poverty reduction that will bring returns in terms of increased productive use of labor and improved economic development. The project performance of the recipient is thus evaluated primarily based on the calculation of economic rate of return.[41] This results in the essential focus on the importance of material input such as textbooks and teaching/learning aids but at the expense of "quality". This also leads to the already advantaged to be further advantaged. But few educators share these rigid economic-instrumental orientations of quality education, and some opposing opinions have arisen out of it.

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[39] Bennel, P., (1996) "Using and Abusing of Return: a Critique of the World Bank's 1995 Education Review" in International Journal of Education Development, Vol. 16, No. 3, pp. 235-248.

[40] Smith, R., (1997) "World Bank Educational Policy: From Technicism to Close Proximity?" in J. Lynch, C. Modgil and S. Modgil, (eds.), (1997) Education and Development: Tradition and Innovation - Concepts, Approaches and Assumptions, Vol. 1, London: Cassell.

[41] The World Bank, (1996) Performance Monitoring Indicators: A Handbook for Task Managers, Operations Policy Department, Washington, D. C.: the World Bank, p. 1; see also Tan, J. P. and Mingat, A., (1992) Education in Asia: A Comparative Study of Cost and Financing, Washington D. C.: The World Bank, ch. 4.

2.2.2 Social Expressive Paradigms

More and more educators and researchers around the world challenge this Bank's rigid economic view of education. The most outspoken critics of the economic-instrumental orientations in education policy agenda display the tension between democracy and its social welfare functions and the conditions for functional success of the dominant Western paradigms. Lynch argues that this tension is seen in the movement from an investment-oriented approach to the provision of the UPE to one that recognizes the intrinsic value of equity as a goal.[42] Therefore, he is in a strong position to stimulate fresh thinking on how to replace the exclusivity of the efficiency-oriented growth and dependence paradigms of development with a new equity-oriented covenant of sustainable interdependent development, based on human rights.

This democratic view of education is not a new one. Conceptualized as "people-centered" or participatory development, this approach has appeared on the scene in the last 20 or more years, beginning with the assumption that "sustainable development ultimately depends on enhancing people's capacities as individuals and groups to improve their own lives and to take greater control over their own destinies."[43] This is a

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[42] Lynch, J., (1997) Education and development: Tradition and Innovation - A Human Rights Analysis, Introductory Volume, London: Cassell, p. 3.

[43] Ogun, B., (1989) Internal UNICEF Memo, New York: UNICEF.

complex process that needs constant efforts and reflective, engaged studies. But the increased trend in administrative decentralization, popular mobilization through the genuine devolution of political and budgetary authority in most of the developing countries facilitate the concept of empowerment of the people to be moving from rhetoric to concrete practice.[44] The international agencies' initiative of the EFA through making basic education available to all is adding a momentum to the move.

2.2.3 Alternative Endogenous Paradigms

An interest in indigenous education, originating with the Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) sector, has led to a more genuine pursuit of endogenous conceptualization of quality.[45] Lynch argues that the neglect of indigenous knowledge systems and the implicit and explicit devaluation of local culture, with its impact on the cognitive functioning and learning of students, has been the source of the failure or under-performance of many projects.[46] Proposing more recognition of local knowledge,

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[44] Shaeffer, S., (1999) Increasing and Improving the Quality of Basic Education: A Framework for Collaborating for Educational Change, Monograph No. 3, Paris: UNESCO: IIEP, p. 5.

[45] Page, E., (1997) In Search of Authentic Voice: An Ethnography of Aid Relationships, a dissertation of Master of Arts in Education and International Development, Institute of London, University of London, unpublished.

[46] Lynch, J., (1997) Education and development: Tradition and Innovation - A Human Rights Analysis, Introductory Volume, London: Cassell, p. 4.

culture and informal network of communication and calling for greater partnership and participation at all levels, endogenous conceptualization of quality education advocates for tailoring to the context-and culture-specific problems.

2.2.4 UNICEF's Perspectives on Quality Education

Distinguished from other UN agencies, UNICEF's conceptualization of quality education is that it should be regarded as a basic human right by providing people with better tools for bettering their lives and situation and for achievement of a functional and sustainable level of learning and life skills.[47] Educational aid is institutionally justified as investment in the fulfillment of basic learning needs, focusing on the developing nations with children and marginalized population as particular targets. As it becomes increasingly evident that high quality of education cannot be achieved without the marriage of the highest level of academic and professional knowledge and skills with the interests, preoccupations and commitment of the ordinary community, UNICEF is in a very strong stand to advocate quality education as to accommodate the different needs of different clients.

It is UNICEF's more genuine pursuit that developmental problems must be

[47] UNICEF, (1993) Education for All: Popular Participation, Mobilization and Decentralization for EFA, New York: UNICEF, p. 1.

overcome both in terms of relevance to the community and establishing a curriculum which is both universal and specifically tailor-made for a particular culture and situation.[48] However, the documented attempts to keep a balance of regional variations with various partners' participation and contribution to education are the complexity of endeavor and need constant, engaged and integral efforts to turn rhetoric into reality.

2.2.5 China's Perspectives on Quality Education

Influenced by the Confucius' educational philosophy, which is strongly elite-oriented, the conceptualization of quality education in the Chinese context has its own uniqueness. Schools are supposed to produce respected scholars who are not only expected to be knowledgeable but above all should possess all the virtues about social relations.[49]

Although the ideal of education to become gentlemen is no longer prevalent in the contemporary Chinese education, the paradigm of treating a student as a whole person remains. That is, good education should educate students for all-round development. The notion of five aspects of education: moral, intellectual, physical,

[48] Cheng, K. M., (1994) "Quality of Education as Perceived in Chinese Culture" in T. Takala, (ed.), (1994) Quality of Education in the Context of Culture in Developing Countries, Tampere: University of Tampere Press, pp. 67-84.

[49] Tu, W. M., (1996) Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

social and aesthetic, still dominates the conceptualization of the Chinese quality education. What distinguishes the Chinese quality education is its prioritization of the moral aspect. This explains why, in a 4-country comparative research project on quality of education across China, India, Mexico and Guinea, coordinated by China Central Institute for Educational Research (CCIER), the Chinese researchers insisted that the measurement of literacy alone is very inadequate, and the measurement of moral dimensions should be included.[50]

Ironically, parallel to this interpretation of educational quality is another common conceptualization among many of educators and parents in China, which seemed based on the increasing transition and pass rates to a higher level of education. The debate on "decreasing the learning burden and attempts to reduce curriculum overload continued, but it has had only limited success."[51] Driven by the exam-oriented system in the Chinese education, competition for access to higher learning institutions became more open and has reached such an alarming degree that MOE has decided to conduct a reform on the national entrance-exam system recently. The emphasis given by

[50] Cheng, K. M., (1994) "Quality of Education as Perceived in Chinese Culture" in T. Takala, (ed.) (1994) Quality of Education in the Context of Culture in Developing Countries, Tampere: University of Tampere Press, p. 7.

[51] Lewin, K., Xu, H., Little, A. and Zheng, J. W., (1994) Educational Innovation in China: Tracing the Impact of the 1985 Reforms, Essex: Longman, p. 215.

the syllabi to lighten the learning burden, reduce homework or out-of-school assignments in order to cultivate creative and independent thinkers through pupil-centered teaching strategies has been reinforced in the new reform policy.[52]

Clearer recognition of the regional variations results in another conceptualization of quality education, which is based on the avoidance of marginalisation (and poverty) in a situation where the increase of access to relevant schooling and the decrease of drop-out and repetition are assumed to be increasingly vital. Support is available to the less developed areas both from central government and others but the magnitude of it is not on a scale that will rapidly reduce the differences in conditions and performance that exist, and improve quality education.

Embracing all these conceptualizations, there seems to be some common desires: the experience of education should be more relevant and fulfilling for all students, and be more supportive to the human resource development which, in turn, benefits the national social-economic development.

The debates above reveal that the complex issues of aid and quality education could influence appropriateness of interventions of educational aid. Expectation of educational aid invariably depends on concepts of educational quality. Analysis of

[52] Chen, Z. L., "Reform on the Exam System of Higher Education in China" (in Chinese) in People's Daily (Renmin Ribao), May 24, 1998, Beijing. Chen is the minister of education of China.

educational aid and quality suggests that although there exist influential discourses of quality education formed by the predominantly WB project actors, there have been the strength of endogenous alternatives which perceive quality education as equipping the marginalized people with knowledge and life skills for particular culture and situation, as basic rights.

China has experienced a process from defiance to compliance with aid for the needs of its national modernization and development. The efforts in seeking foreign funds and co-operation reveal the strength of its own perceptions and an apparent awareness of its own uniqueness. For China and donors alike such as UNICEF, external aid appears to be perceived as catalyst that should be integrated into the main stream of the national efforts in facilitating the realization of its national development goals.

2.3 Development of Qualified Teachers

Conceptualizations of educational aid and quality education determine the expectation of qualified teachers. Similar to the debates on aid, educational aid and quality education, there are also several major contrasting views about qualified teachers.

2.3.1 UNICEF's Paradigm

The logical outcome of UNICEF's increasing action and advocacy to the UPE, especially the expansion of primary education for children in the developing countries is that the development of qualified teachers should be based on the equal opportunity in education both through formal and non-formal education so as to allow the much needed expansion of primary school enrollments and to realize their role in promoting the UPE.[53] Therefore, "good" teachers should have an increasingly complex role to play, both as purveyors of knowledge and facilitators and, in view of this position, they should be agents of change.

This position maintains a commitment to the improvement of teachers' pedagogical skills and qualities, such as initiative, dynamism and sense of responsibility. Based on principles of personal experience as a catalyst of educational potential, UNICEF reinforces that teacher education programs should be as much a psychological and social process as a cognitive one, taking into consideration of the human, individual and practical dimensions.[54] Upholding the principle of "learning through experience",

[53] See Phillips, H. M. (1987) UNICEF in Education: A Historical Perspective, Monograph IX, UNICEF History Series, New York: UNICEF; see also Barkatoolah, A. B. S., (1990) Learning from Experience: A New Approach for Teacher Upgrading, Paris: UNESCO/UNICEF Program.

[54] Barkatoolah, A. B. S., (1990) Learning from Experience: A New Approach for Teacher Upgrading, Paris: UNESCO/UNICEF Program, p. 47.

this paradigm takes the recognition and accreditation of experiential learning as a means of facilitating access to a study program. By setting up a relevant motivating program, the individual trainee is put at the center of the learning process and his/her personal development is greatly encouraged.

2.3.2 Economist, Technicist Paradigms

Thinking of the Bank's economic-instrumental orientations in education, it is not strange to find out that its view of "good" teachers are those who produce the great number of pupils that can demonstrate measurable proficiency in the shortest possible time, with as few drop-outs, repeaters and failures as possible.[55] The logical Bank's response to both pre- and in-service provisions for promoting and keeping the quality of teachers is to focus on good knowledge of subject and a wide repertoire of teaching skills.[56] It usually has a direct and positive bearing on the quality of teaching performance and consequently on the achievement of students.[57] But given how the

[55] Page, E., (1997) In Search of Authentic Voice: An Ethnography of Aid Relationships, a dissertation of Master of Arts in Education and International Development, Institute of London, University of London, unpublished, p. 13.

[56] The World Bank, (1995b) Strengthening the Effectiveness of Aid – Lesson from Donors, Washington, D. C.: the World Bank, p. 7; also Lockheed, M. E. and Verspoor, A. M., (1990) Improving Primary Education in Developing Countries: A Review of Policy Options, Washington, D. C.: The World Bank, p. 41.

[57] Schiefelbein, E. and Simmons, J., (1981) Teacher Training and Student Achievement in Less

achievement is defined, still, there are many of the pre- and in-service training courses conducted based on this Bank's paradigm on pedagogical skill development, which, in Shaeffer's comments, render teacher trainers mere "empty vessel", the passive recipient of new content, new method, or both.[58]

2.3.3 Critical Endogenous Paradigm

What makes critical pedagogues distinctive from other views in approaches to quali f i e d teacher development is its crucial dimension in political and social consciousness. Through frequently involving the use of critical and reflective conception which is also highlighted in technicist view, critical educators such as Carr and Kemmis prioritize inquiry models that unite thought and action, and view educational phenomena as political and social constructions rather than as natural and ending events, and their arguments focus on qualified teacher development that should be directed towards the reflection not on pedagogical elements, but also on the political and social context of schooling.[59] Ultimately, teachers are trained to become

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Developed Countries, Washington, D. C.: The World Bank.

[58] Shaeffer, S., (1990) Increasing and Improving the Quality of Basic Education: A Framework for Collaborating for Educational Change, Monograph No. 3, Paris: UNESCO: IIEP, p. 17.

[59] Carr, W. and Kemmis, S., (1986) Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research, London: The Falmer Press.

"reflective" and "critical" in the sense not only of educational practices themselves, but also of the perceptions that emerge out of broader social and political contexts.

2.3.4 China's Perspectives on Qualified Teachers

To define qualified teachers in China, it is necessary to appreciate their evolving social status and expected roles. The social status of teachers after the founding of P. R. China has often been problematic, especially referring to the anti-intellectualism during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. This has rendered teachers' social position discouraging and frustrating, their roles more ambiguous and complicated ever since.

As discussed earlier, over the past 40 years, many of debates in China have centered over defining ideology and knowledge in discussion of education's contribution to the national development. This complicates the work of those who labor in these areas. Paine comments that "China's teachers, like all teachers, have had to be qualified to serve as the bearers of state power and as representatives of technical expertise".[60] What makes the Chinese teachers distinguished, in Paine's view, is that the relationship between these two functions of teachers has changed so often and with such

[60] Paine, L., (1991) "Reforming Teachers: The Organization, Reproduction, and Transformation of Teaching" in I. Epstein, (ed.), (1991) Chinese Education: Problems, Policies and Prospects, New York and London: Garland Publishing, INC., p. 220.

a force that to meet both qualifications (ideological and technical) has often put teachers under great scrutiny.

Given the example regarding the frequent changes in teachers' role, Paine displays here which was extremely true of the unusual turbulent period, it is reasonable to say that the roles the Chinese teachers are expected to play are indeed complicated and multi-faceted. This is quite apparent in the Chinese holistic paradigm. Teachers are expected not only to teach well in classrooms, but also to handle moral and attitudinal development of students. They are regarded as teachers, but as masters and parents to students at the same time. It is often expected that teachers should teach by verbal instruction and personal example as well. "Setting examples with your own body" is the general motto prevalent in all Chinese communities.

The same complication can be seen in the China's teachers' quality considering their greatly different access to professional preparation and contexts of practice. Teachers in China represent a large and diverse group. In 1998, primary and secondary school teachers alone numbered around 11 million, but only 85.1 per cent teachers in primary schools, 60.4 per cent in junior secondary schools, and 53 per cent in senior secondary school are classified as "qualified" teachers. About 10 per cent so-called "minban" or "people supported teachers" that are mostly based in rural and minority

areas are regarded as unqualified.[61]

Considering the urgent and arduous task that confronts China as it strives to carry out the 9-year compulsory education and enhance the quality of the whole nation, the strengthening of teacher education and training for improving the quality of teachers has crucially important and profound significance.[62] Only when a steady rise of teachers' quality has been realized can it promote educational development which, in turn, promotes the overall national development.

The concept of "qualified" teacher is relatively recent in China. But this is only true of the "authentic quantitative" classification system of teachers into being "qualified" and "pre-qualified", which was adopted in line with the publishing of the Teachers Law of P. R. China in 1994. The levels of qualification correspond to the level of teachers' existing appointments as shown below in Table One.

Table One Qualified Teachers by Level and Origin

Teacher in	Graduate from

[61] MOE, (1999) Yearbook of Educational Statistics of China, 1998), Beijing: People's Education Press. For lack of sufficient budget for basic education, educational authorities especially in rural and remote regions employed a certain amount of "Minban" teachers who have not received enough training before service and are paid by local communities not by the government over the past 25 years.

[62] Zhou, Yuliang, (1990) Education in Contemporary China, Changsha, China: Hunan Education Publishing House, p. 330.

Kindergarten	Pre-school Normal School and above
Primary School	Junior Normal School and above
Junior Secondary School	Senior Normal School and above
Senior Secondary School	(Normal) University with a degree and above

Source: *The Teachers Law of P. R. China*[63]

As in most countries, teacher education in China can be categorized as pre-service or in-service. Pre-service teacher education prepares trainees to teach in classroom, while in-service teacher training enhanced proficiency for those who are already in service. Table One displays that depending on the level at which future teachers will work, their education is offered at secondary and higher education levels. At the secondary level, teachers are trained for primary schools and kindergartens; at the higher level, secondary school teachers and higher educators are trained.

In addition to this "authentic quantitative classification" of qualified teachers, however, there are some "qualitative criteria" in the commonly shared perception of qualified teachers long before the existence of the "quantitative classification".

[63] MOE, (1999) The Laws on Education of the People's Republic of China, Beijing: Foreign Language Press, pp. 54-56.

Although there are some specific contents in the criteria that have been changed over different periods, the basic lines are still there: qualified teachers are conceptualized as those who are able to nurture students to be moral, intelligent, and politically and socially conscious. They should necessarily have developed desirable attitudes and values towards their future life. Meanwhile society always expects a sense of dedication and exemplary behavior from teachers. Their behavior must serve as a model of emulation to younger generation. It is also fundamental that teachers should demonstrate competency in any subject that they teach, by designing appropriate instructional materials to conduct classes. They are also expected to be productive by keeping in touch with new trends in education and aspiring to new modern teaching methods and reforms. Teacher education provides the means for teachers to reach these goals, and teacher training provides opportunities primarily for pedagogical improvement.

CHAPTER THREE

GAINS AND LOSSES: EXPLORATION OF PROJECT DOCUMENTS AND EVALUATION REPORTS

The purpose of this chapter is to overview, based on the analysis of the project documents and evaluation reports, the different project characteristics and processes in the 5 cycles of the project implementation over the past 17 years, so as to find out what are the gains and losses; what type of partnership the ISTT project is. UNICEF has

assisted China's on-going efforts to realize the universalization and development of primary education through establishing a nationwide network of teacher training schools/centers and upgrading the quality of teachers. Emphasis is given to "model" experimentation through setting up 163 project schools, followed by the support to widespread diffusion of the activities to other non-project schools. By adopting the system of country program, the project has formulated and implemented on a cycle basis with each cycle usually lasting 5 years, as shown in Table Two:

Table Two Project Objectives and Budget of Different Cycles

Project Name	Cycle and Date	Main Objectives	Budget
Minority Teacher Training	1st: 1982 - 1984	Teacher training for health in minority areas	Gov.: US$ 4.5 million UN: US$ 1.2 million
In-service Teacher Training for Pre-school, Primary S chool and Special Education	2nd : 1985 - 1989	To set up & expand capacity of 23 project centers for primary sc hool teacher training, 17 centers and 8 normal university for pre-school teacher and 1 center for special education teacher training	Gov.: US$27.7 million UN: US$6.3 million
Teacher Training for Pre-school, Primary School and Special	3 rd : 1990 - 1994	To expand the training network down to county level for training and	Gov.:US$21.8 million UN: US$5.2 million

Education in Poor and Minority Areas		upgrading of teachers in 300 poor and minority counties	
Bridging Cycle	4th: 1995-1996	To strengthen the construction and capacity for in-service teacher training of different categories	UN: US$1.05 million
Basic Education Program in Poor Areas	5th:1996 - 2000	To facilitate the achievement of the goal of universal primary education by 2000 through teacher training targeting at poor & minority areas	Gov.:$33.75 million UN: $11.25 million

Note: *Gov. refers to the Chinese government; UN refers to UNICEF.*

Table Two briefly shows the main objectives of the project at different cycles. Over the past 17 years, China/UNICEF co-operation in education has covered 8 projects, and the ISTT project is one of them. Starting on a modest scale and trial basis from the 1st cycle of 1982-1984, the scope and coverage of the project were enhanced progressively during 1984-1989 and 1990-1994 cycles. Initiated to assist China's effort to establish a nationwide teacher-training network, the project has been directed at strengthening pre-school, special education and primary school teacher training. Support has been given to the horizontal extension of the network of key teacher-training institutions to all parts of the country and the vertical extension down to a

number of county-level institutions.

Activities have been designed to promote from quantitative improvement of teacher training during the first three cycles to qualitative development in the later two. Special efforts have been made to add momentum to the national drive towards reducing poverty through upgrading teachers' quality for the UPE. Attention has been given to early childhood care, nutrition, and occupational needs, so as to make it relevan t to the local needs of the quality of pre- and primary school education. Children with special educational needs have been one of the prime concerns and special education teacher training has also been one of the focal points of the project.

Although the 1st cycle started on a modest scale and on an experimental basis, it was a process of enhancing mutual understanding between UNICEF and the Chinese government and accumulating experience that had laid a sound foundation for the further co-operation in the subsequent cycles.

3.1 Project Characteristics of Different Cycles

3.1.1 Project Characteristics of the 1st Cycle from 1982 to 1984

As mentioned earlier, it was in 1982 when UNICEF first came to work in China and started the 1st cycle of co-operation in the field of education with the Chinese

government. Since then, the co-operation has gone through 5 project cycles.

The 1st cycle was initiated on a trial basis, which lasted only 2 years from 1982 to 1984. It set out to facilitate the existing 9 individual in-service primary teacher training centers, mostly located in minority areas.[64] Poor communication and sparse population resulted in the training activities being conducted primarily through distance education with 60-day face-to-face tutoring per year. The project aimed to improve teachers' knowledge and competence in providing health courses to children suitable to minority and remote areas. Surprised by the poor physical facilities in the 9 centers, UNICEF allocated input of US$1.2 million, focusing on equipment assistance to significantly upgrade the physical conditions of these training institutions.

My experience in searching through the project documents deeply impressed me that this cycle seemed to have started in haste, other than a simple version of a project agreement, I did not manage to find out anything else available that was relevant to the project. There was not even an evaluation report. With this puzzle, I consulted the project executive director Mr. Bao Tongzeng,[65] whose 15-year involvement in teacher education made him as one of the "authentic" persons in the project. According to his

[64] China/UNICEF, (1982) The Project Agreement on In-service Teacher Training in Minority Areas, Beijing: China/UNICEF, p.1.

[65] See Appendix I.

recollections, China/UNICEF co-operation in educational sector seemed to start at random. Mr. Bao had a strong feeling that, on the one hand, to receive international aid was a new initiative to the Chinese government which perceived it simply as the receipt of money and advanced equipment. It was not strange that UNICEF headquarters commented on the 1st cycle draft of the project proposal as "a disappointing narrative" that read like a supply list and request of US$ 1.2 million of assistance from UNICEF.[66] 2 months later, the proposal was jointly revised by UNICEF and the Chinese government in a form of the present project agreement with more sensible strategies and project activities outlined. On the other hand, the complex economic and cultural situations and serious geographical inequalities in education in China were so new to UNICEF at initial stage and, it was not clear how to accommodate the Chinese needs. F or example, the video camera provided by UNICEF at a teacher school of Ganzi Aba Tibetan minority region of Sichuan province was even more advanced than that at the municipal TV station at that time. As a result, it turned out to be a waste, since the technical personnel had no idea of how to use the camera.[67]

[66] UNICEF, (1982) Plan for the Enhancement of Primary Schools Teachers In-service Training: UNICEF Office for China Review of the Proposed, New York: UNICEF, p. 2.

[67] My interview with Mr. Bao Tongzeng.

3.1.2 Project Characteristics of the 2nd Cycle from 1985 to 1989

The 2nd cycle, lasting from 1985 to 1989, revealed more carefully formulated strategies and better organized agreed upon project activities. Consisting of 3 sub-projects, this cycle aimed to promote the national drive towards establishing 20 primary school teacher training centers, 17 pre-school teacher training centers plus 8 pre-school teacher training programs at 8 normal universities and 1 center for special education teacher training. The specific objective of this cycle was to improve the construction and expand training capacity of these centers through equipment supply and technical assistance from UNICEF and the Chinese central government.

The situation was that there were approximately 135.78 million children of primary school age (7-11 years old), representing 12.3 per cent of the total population.[68] The need for improving coverage and quality of primary education was extremely pressing to meet the national policy goals of eliminating both poverty and backwardness.[69] This constituted an even more formidable task for the government as it had yet to achieve the UPE for all children. It had only defined its goal to do so in cities and towns by 1985 and for the whole country by 1990.[70]

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[68] MOE, (1999) Essential Statistics of Education in China, Beijing: People's Education Press, p. 57.

[69] UNICEF, (1985) Project Plan of Action.GR.84/III/003, Beijing, p. 3.

[70] Zhou, Yuliang, (1990) Education in Contemporary China, Changsha, China: Hunan Education Publishing House, p. 4.

This imposed a high demand for primary school teachers and the government had to compromise its requirement of teachers recruited. As a result of the ad hoc recruitment, 40 per cent of the 5 million primary schools teachers were unqualified, with 50-60 per cent of them in rural areas. This had resulted in a dramatic drop of primary education quality with an alarming level of increased dropout rate primarily in rural areas.[71] Emphasizing that unless the quality of primary school teachers improved, the popularization of high quality of primary education would not succeed, the Chinese government had been allocating large resources ever since 1976 to reopen its training schools/centers for primary school teachers after the 10-year closure during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. This gained momentum when the government convened the 1st National Conference on Teacher Education in 1984 since the implementation of the open-door policy. At the Conference, the Chinese government launched a nationwide institutional network for teacher training. 40 primary teacher training schools/centers out of totally 2000 were designated to serve as model "key schools/centers" in China's then 29 provinces and autonomous regions.[72]

20 of the 40 schools/centers at provincial levels, which demonstrated the

[71] UNICEF, (1985) Project Plan of Action GR. 84/III/003, Beijing, p. 4.

[72] MOE, (1999) A Brief Introduction to China's Teacher Education since 1949 (in Chinese), Beijing: China Higher Education Press, p. 17.

potential to make qualitative improvements in primary school teacher training in terms of content and methodology, were selected for the 2nd cycle of co-operation with UNICEF. 3 additional training schools/centers in minority areas were included as well.

3.1.2.1 Sub-project A: Primary School Teacher Training

This sub-project concentrated on the development of each of the participating institutions into a "key center" that would be improved in teaching facilities, materials and innovative approaches to in-service teacher training. Each school/center would also serve as a regional base and provide tutors for distance education activities for in-service primary school teachers, in co-operation with other schools/centers that could help in organizing local learner groups.[73]

Taking into account the individual needs and potentials of the 23 participating schools/centers, one of the objectives of this sub-project was to train 100,000 teachers annually through on-campus and distance education in in-service training activities for a total of 500,000 teachers to be trained before 1989. 60,000 teacher trainers from 1,900 other primary school teacher training schools/centers would be selected for in-service training in subjects such as Chinese language, mathematics, child psychology, and the u

[73] UNICEF, (1985) Project Plan of Action GR. 84/III/003, Beijing, pp. 6-7.

se of audio-visual equipment by 1989. Each center would complete the construction or renovation of 1 new building by the end of 1986 in order to enlarge training capacity. A nother objective was that each training center would produce more up-to-date teacher reference materials to meet the needs of local teacher training.

The allocation of funds by the government was estimated at US$ 12.7 million, which would be used to cover the costs of conventional teaching equipment, construction of school buildings, administration, and so on. UNICEF's input into this sub-project was US$ 3.05 million, which covered the expenditure on teaching equipment, shipment of the teaching equipment and non-supply (technical) assistance.

The supply assistance included basic audio-visual equipment to support publication and distribution of teaching reference materials, teacher's bulletins, and distance teacher training activities by radio, television and correspondence. It also included 4-wheel transport (one such vehicle per center) to assist in the supervision of fieldwork and teaching and monitoring of distance education activities. The non-supply assistance included experience-exchange activities through formulating and monitoring the work plans of individual training centers, organizing workshops on use and maintenance of equipment, distance education, and other priority concerns. Assistance to foreign consultants for helping with planning and applied research activities was

another component of the technical items. Overseas training for key trainers and administrators in core areas such as distance education and pedagogy was also included.

For monitoring and evaluation, the project director would work out an annual report including activities for implementation of the plan, qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the activities, achievements made, problems encountered and solutions. MOE would be responsible for review of the co-operation with UNICEF Beijing Office and implementation of the entire project, twice a year, and give suggestions for the work of next year/years.

Internal special supervisory mechanism was set up. Inspectors from MOE and UNICEF would be sent to all the participating centers at least once each calendar year to review the implementation of the project. The 23 respective provincial educational authorities would send inspectors twice each year to those centers before they submitted a written report of their findings to MOE. The project director would submit a detailed written progress report to MOE and UNICEF once a year before the annual review meeting was held. The participants of this meeting were from UNICEF, MOE, the related provinces and autonomous regions.[74]

The initial formulation of the nationwide network for primary school teacher

[74] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

training at provincial level at this stage and that of supervisory mechanism had laid a sound foundation for its further expansion down to the municipal and county levels.

3.1.2.2 Sub-project B: Pre-school Teacher Training

The 2nd sub-project of this cycle was pre-school teacher training at related normal schools. It was a harsh reality that there were totally 66 million pre-school children, 3-6 years of age, but only 11 million (17 per cent) of them enrolled in kindergartens in China. What made the situation even more challenging was that approximately 70 per cent of the 430,000 pre-school teachers then were not qualified, and the percentage was even higher in rural and remote areas.[75] The then training system for pre-school teacher training included both pre-service and in-service training, conducted at training institutions known as normal schools. Their training capacities were rather low. Even more limited was the capacity of those teacher universities that had pre-school education program to train pre-school teacher trainers. The government had showed its concern over the situation at the 6th National People's Congress held in June 1983, "kindergarten education is of great importance and should be developed in a planned way and be gradually readjusted and improved, beginning with the bettering of

[75] MOE, (1984) Yearbook of Educational Statistics of China, 1983, Beijing: People's Education Press, p. 76.

kindergarten teacher schools".[76]

It was the government's initiative to expand the training capacity for pre-school education to especially serve the great majority of underprivileged children in semi-rural and rural areas by increasing kindergarten teacher training schools/centers from 36 in 1984 to 50 by 1985, and to 100 by 1990. 17 of the larger 36 schools/centers were selected for the co-operation with UNICEF from 1984 to 1989.

The objectives of this sub-project were to expand the training capacity of the 17 training schools/centers to train a minimum of 13,300 new kindergarten teachers and provide in-service training to 33,090 current kindergarten teachers who would provide teaching for 1.23 million children. The 17 schools/centers would also act as experimental ones with adequate and full functions to produce an individualized plan of action appropriate for local needs, including research and development activities on new ways to reach more rural children with pre-school education activities. In addition, 100-300 faculty managers/trainers at these training schools/centers would be upgraded through various in-service training activities.[77]

One more objective was that applied research was conducted on the early childhood development and pre-school education, which was then a relatively new

[76] UNICEF, (1985) Project Plan of Action GR. 84/III/003, Beijing, p. 4.

[77] UNICEF, (1985) Project Plan of Action GR. 84/III/003, Beijing, pp. 9-10.

function for pre-school teacher schools. Therefore, the 8 normal universities with training programs for kindergarten teacher trainers were identified as the project institutions to link with the 17 schools/centers for joint research activities and their application.

For supplies and equipment of this sub-project, the central government set a total input of US$11.25 million and gave priority to investment for renovation of the 17 training schools/centers, while the respective local governments provided budgets for purchasing books, teaching and reference materials, and other consumable items. With a n input of US$2.55 million, UNICEF focused on the provision of language laboratories and small-scale offset printing facilities. One 4-wheel vehicle for fieldwork and teaching was provided to each training school/center. Basic audio-visual equipment was also provided to support on-site and distance education activities.

70 per cent of UNICEF's input was used for non-supply activities. These included short-term and long-term overseas training programs on topics of applied research methodology, innovative teaching approaches and methods and techniques for distance training for pre-school education. Non-supply activities also included a director's planning workshop at the initial stage of the project, some consultation activities on high priority training and applied research issues between paired teacher

schools and universities. The use of Chinese specialists to train pre-school normal school faculty and technical consultation on child psychology, development of children's intellectual abilities were also parts of the technical assistance.

For evaluation and supervision, the principals of the 17 training schools/centers were responsible for submitting progress reports twice a year. The respective municipal educational authorities where these training schools/centers were located conducted on-the-spot supervision and inspection. The provincial educational authorities would review the progress of the project every six months. Finally, the then SEC and UNICEF jointly assumed the responsibilities of evaluation and supervision by convening annual conference for the sub-project directors from the respective provinces and the 17 pre-school teacher training schools and the 8 normal universities in order to exchange experiences in training and applied research activities.

As an integrated part of the nationwide teacher-training network, the 17 project training centers plus the 8 normal universities for pre-school teacher training with individualized plans of action facilitated the establishment of more schools in this field especially in semi-rural and rural areas and promoted the expansion of their training capacity for pre-school teachers. The new initiative of joint research activities and their application in this sub-project provided opportunities for improving the quality and

development of these training schools/centers.

3.1.2.3 Sub-project C: Special Education Teacher Training

The 3rd sub-project of this cycle aimed to assist China's special education training provision. Up to 1986, there were no statistics available in China of the exact total number of physically handicapped children. The random estimated data based on the sample survey by experts was 30 million, accounting for 10 per cent of the total children.[78] By 1985, however, there were only 319 special education schools with 35,000 students, but none of the existing normal schools ran teacher training program of special education.[79] Realizing the urgent need of developing special education teacher training, in late 1985, the Chinese government decided to establish the first training center for in-service special education teachers.

To correspond with this initiative, UNICEF committed to input US$0.7 million, concentrating on technical support for planning and management of the center, consultation on evaluation of the applied research, and training activities with regard to teaching contents in blind, deaf, dumb and mentally retarded education.

[78] MOE, (1987) Yearbook of Educational Statistics of China, 1986, Beijing: People's Education Press, p. 42.

[79] UNICEF, (1985) Project Plan of Action GR. 84/III/003, Beijing, p. 6.

Another part of the technical assistance was short-term overseas training and recruitment of international consultants for research on early childhood education for disabled children and on evaluation of training activities. Basic supply assistance by UNICEF included teaching aids and audio-visual equipment.

China Central Institute for Educational Research, the executive agency, was responsible for working out annual report of project progress focusing on training activities, quantitative and qualitative outcomes, the problems and solutions. MOE and UNICEF jointly conducted annual inspection and evaluation before working out propos als for the next year.

The project formulation and implementation processes entailed in the document revealed that starting from scratch of the co-operation in teacher training in the 1st cycle, both the Chinese government and UNICEF were exploring and amassing experience, through their trials and errors for better and efficient co-operation in teacher education. Designated 23 normal schools/centers for primary school teachers, 17 training schools/centers for pre-school teachers and 1 training center for special education teachers with additional training programs for trainee trainers in the 8 related normal universities as demonstration institutions, the processes also showed UNICEF's efforts in accommodating the initiative of the Chinese government to establish the nationwide

network of teacher training. It was the priority to improve the training capacity in pre-school, primary, and special education teacher training. MOE's prescriptions of standardized normal schools and in-service teacher training targets were the 2 guidelines for construction and teacher-training activities of the project schools in pursuit of the specific project objectives. Efforts were made to pair these more advanced schools with those less advanced through the means of distance education, research results application and good experience. Each of the sub-projects had its own administrative mechanism. The educational authorities at different levels, ranging from central to provincial and prefecture, had been involved in the project administration, implementation and evaluation.[80] At this stage, the 1st level of the nationwide network for teacher training of different categories had gained its scale, which had struck a pathway for the downward expansion of the network in the next cycle.

3.1.3 Project Characteristics of the 3rd Cycle from 1990 to 1994

Based on what had been established in the previous cycle, the main thrust of this cycle would be the expansion of the nationwide training network down to the schools and sub-centers at prefecture and county levels for the training and upgrading of

[80] Ibid., p. 26.

teachers in the designated 200 to 300 poor, remote and mountainous areas. This would be achieved through 3 sub-projects, with assistance to strengthen the 65 primary teacher schools and the 17 schools for special education teachers within the training network.

3.1.3.1 Sub-project A: Primary School Teacher Training

The key to attaining the UPE was perceived by the government as improving the quality of primary schooling, particularly through upgrading of the teaching force. 32 per cent of the 5.5 million primary school teachers were unqualified, according to the standard of qualification prescribed by SEC, that was, completion of secondary teacher schooling with a certificate.[81] In rural and mountainous areas, the percentage rose to 45. Therefore, there was an urgent need to strengthen in-service training for unqualified teachers and short-term updating courses for qualified teachers as well in order to improve the quality of primary schooling.

The major objective of this sub-project was to expand the nationwide network of primary school teacher training schools/centers from 23 to 65 and improve their training capacity. These schools/centers would also work with local institutions of health and the women's federation, in the field of children's health and nutrition and organized joint

[81] UNICEF, (1990) Project Plan of Action.E64/E32, Beijing, p. 1.

training courses for women's leaders and parents.

It has a specific objective to recruit 160-180 new trainees each year in each participating training school/center, with an annual enrollment of more than 10,000, leading to 30,000 new graduates by 1994. Each participating training school/center would train 320 to 360 in-service teachers in short/long-term courses, mainly in language and mathematics each year, and also assist 3 to 4 non-project normal schools and/or training centers for in-service teachers located in less developed areas in order to upgrade teacher qualifications through extensive use of China Education TV (CETV) teacher-training programs and face-to-face tutoring. Each participating training school/center, in co-operation with another UNICEF-assisted project, the Development and Production of Pre and Primary School Teaching and Reading Materials, would develop teachers' guides and reference materials each year for training courses by using new textbooks introduced in 1991.

The government's input for this sub-project was US$10.17 million, including funds for constructing or renovating buildings, the costs of an increased number of trainers, administrators and technical personnel, and of maintaining and repairing equipment. Simultaneously, UNICEF allocated US$1.95 million, covering the expenditure of purchasing basic equipment such as vehicles and classroom audio-visual

facilities for the participating institutions.

Monitoring and evaluation were conducted based on the school and provincial officials' 6-monthly reports. The project director then would prepare an annual report which would cover specific activities undertaken during the reporting period, quantitative and qualitative indicators of achievements, difficulties encountered and solu tions, and finally proposed activities and the quantitative indicators for the coming year.

This annual report would serve as a basis for a joint review to assess progress and, if necessary, to modify and specify details of the Project Plan of Actions (PPAs) for the coming year/years. The detailed work plans for each year would be attached to the PPAs as annexes. The annual review would take place in late August or early September of each year. Participants would include the project director, program officers from SEC and UNICEF.

Having increased the number of the project training schools/centers for primary school teacher from 23 to 65, this sub-project helped to expand the training capacity in this field. The initiative to link up the project training centers with those non-project ones resulted in dissemination and application of good experience in primary school teacher training, which had efficiently brought along improvement of training provision in rural and disadvantaged areas.

3.1.3.2 Sub-project B: Special Education Teacher Training

With an increasing demand for special education teachers, it was the aim of this sub-project to increase the number of special education training institutions to 17 on the basis of the outcome of the previous cycle. Since most of some 12,000 teachers in the then totally 650 special education schools had no special training, the government decided to expand the provision of special education by establishing another 17 special education training centers or special education programs in regular normal schools in some selected provinces. Under the circumstances, UNICEF made commitment to strengthen the 17 special education normal centers or the special education programs in regular normal schools.[82]

There were mainly 3 objectives of this sub-project. The 1st one was to increase the supply of new teachers by training 9,600 new special education teachers and upgrade qualifications of some 19,200 in-service teachers with tailored courses. The 2nd one was to develop a network of special education normal schools/centers, which would include links with CCIER and the related normal universities. The last objective was to develop a course component, for possible inclusion in primary teacher school

[82] Ibid., p. 19.

curriculum, and to develop, in co-operation with other agencies, suitable materials for short/long-term courses for teachers, parents of handicapped children, and community workers.

The government provided US$3.38 million for constructing or renovating classrooms, increasing numbers of teachers, administrators and technical personnel, for maintaining and repairing equipment, etc., while UNICEF's assistance amounted to US$1.45 million for supplies and equipment, which included vehicles, classroom audio-visual facilities, offset printing equipment for the special education normal schools in 17 provinces. The non-supply assistance from UNICEF included training workshops in the development of curriculum for special education, publicity of materials for parents and community workers as well as distance-education materials such as textbooks and audio-visual aids. It also covered research and experience exchange activities with an annual seminar and staff development through short-term tailored courses abroad.

For monitoring and evaluation, the principles and procedures were the same as Sub-project A, which would not be elaborated here.

Concentrating on the expansion of training capacity for special education teachers, this sub-project also initiated the development of course component, awarding the needs of not only teachers, but also parents of handicapped children, community

workers and counselors, which made the project relevant to the local needs.

3.1.3.3 Sub-project C: Pre-school Teacher Training

To dramatically improve the quality of 670,000 pre-school teachers remained an urgent need. In the previous cycle, only 17 out of the 58 teacher schools which offered pre-school training courses were assisted. This sub-project continued to give support to another 16 schools, some of which were multi-functional normal ones offering training courses for both pre-school and primary school teachers.

This sub-project mainly aimed to train 12,000 new teachers and upgrade qualifications of 24,000 unqualified teachers and make each of the participating normal schools as a resource center for pre-school teacher training within its province by 1994, in order to upgrade professional skills of pre-school teachers in some 100 counties identified as especially disadvantaged by educational and economic criteria. Other objectives were to organize some training courses on children's health, nutrition and education for women's cadres and parents in co-operation with All Chinese Women's Federation (ACWF) and local health institutions and publish a bi-monthly journal "Research on Pre-school Education" for providing information and exchanging

experiences.[83]

The Chinese government provided US$7.25 million for the same items as being covered in Sub-project A and B. UNICEF committed an input of US$1.8million, including equipment assistance, i.e. vehicles, classroom audio-visual facilities, offset printing equipment and so on for the additional 16 pre-school normal schools in some selected provinces. Technical assistance included training workshops in the development of production of distance-education materials such as textbooks, audio-visual teaching equipment and maintenance of the equipment.

The principle and procedures of monitoring and evaluation were again the same as those in Sub-project A and B.

The project documents showed that in this cycle the UNICEF-assisted project continued in assigning another 65 primary school teacher schools, 17 special education teacher schools and 16 pre-school teacher schools from provincial level of the previous cycle further down to prefecture and county levels.

As one of the important links of the chain of the UPE, teachers' quality was presumed by the Chinese government to be crucial but weak and therefore should be sufficiently strengthened especially in rural and minority areas. The alarmingly low

[83] Ibid., p. 27.

percentage of qualified teachers in rural areas against government standards had resulte d in formulating the PPAs to assist the government's initiatives to upgrade teachers' performance in urban areas and increase qualified teachers in rural areas. Therefore, emphasis was put on the establishment and strengthening the role of the project teacher schools and training centers to link with and bring forward those disadvantaged non-project teacher schools/centers in remote, mountainous and minority areas.

Up to the end of this cycle, the formulation of the nationwide network for teacher training of different categories and at different levels had been completed, consisting of 97 primary, 18 special education and 45 pre-school teacher training institutions.

The efficacy of capacity building through participatory decision-making is reflected in the administrative structure described in the PPAs. MOE officially was assigned the responsibility for overall administration and coordination over the whole project. The PPAs designated the educational authorities at provincial level to determine budget allocation for building construction, course guidelines, training approaches and contents. They were also responsible for co-ordination of the project activities within their respective provinces. Principals of the project schools/centers were in the position to work out guidelines for management approaches, implementation procedures as well

as to draft a half-year summary report. Local actors' involvement was regarded as the most crucial and therefore most emphasized.[84]

The efficacy of capacity building and real sustainable development was also magnified in the PPAs by the project consultants who were to be engaged in negotiation processes, on-site investigations, training materials development, and research activities. The consultants' role and opinions were highly regarded in the full involvement in the project evaluation and in their facilitation of the contextualization of the project in their recommendations on the improvement of the project.

3.1.4 Project Characteristics of the 4th Cycle from 1995 to 1996

1995 was the final year of China's 8th 5-year Plan (1991-1995), that predicted the coming momentum to be gained in the 9th 5-year Plan (1996-2000). In order to better adapt to and assist the Chinese national development, UNICEF adjusted its 5-year country project to the so-called "1-year bridging cycle", so that the co-operation of the next cycle with the Chinese government in educational sector could keep pace with China's 9th 5-year Plan for National Economic and Social Development.[85]

[84] Ibid., p. 29.

[85] UNICEF, (1995) Project Plan of Action/E64/05, Beijing.

This cycle aimed to strengthen the already established nationwide network to respectively enroll 21,600 primary school, 1,620 special education and 5,600 pre-school teacher trainees each year. It also aimed to provide in-service training opportunities to 270,000 primary school, 20,000 special education and 30,000 pre-school teachers in poor, remote and minority areas for improving their pedagogical skills and professional competence. UNICEF's input was US$867,000 for primary school teacher training, US$110,000 for pre-school teacher training and US$33,000 for the special education teacher training.[86] It was regretted that records on the Chinese financial input and the evaluation report were not available.

3.1.5 Project Characteristics of the 5th Cycle from 1996 to 2000

Starting from 1993, the State Council of China laid down the overall development strategy of transferring policy from "relief provision" to active development for "income-generating" for poverty alleviation projects till the end of the last century. It defined that the country still had about 500 economically and educationally backward counties with 80 million people, most of them were distributed in remote, mountainous and minority areas.[87]

[86] Ibid., p.4.

[87] People's Daily (Renmin Ribao), Jan. 2, 1993, Beijing.

The Outline of Educational Reform and Development (OERD), issued in February of 1993 set the priority in China's educational development in the 1990s as the universaliztion of 9-year compulsory education in 85 per cent of the total population areas, of 5-6 year primary education in the remaining population areas.[88]

In September, SEC convened the 2nd National Conference on Teacher Education and set out that the core of teacher education was, based on the established nationwide teacher-training network, to improve quality of teacher contingents. Emphasis should be put on facilitating the development of teacher contingents in rural areas through exploring new managerial and operational system that could accommodate the need for promoting the universalization of the 9-year compulsory education.

S t arting from the 5th cycle from 1996 to 2000, the structure of the China/UNICEF co-operative projects in teacher training has been changed, which is to be implemented through "program approach". Under the program title of Basic Education Program for Poor Areas (BEPPAs), there are 4 sub-projects. What makes the teacher-training project different in this cycle is that it has no longer been one of the sub-projects but an integrated component in the package of interventions named primary education program in poor counties, covering 102 counties in 11 provinces and

[88] SEC, (1993), The Outline of Educational Reform and Development in China, Beijing: People's Education Press, p. 4

autonomous regions. Aiming to strengthen primary education in the state-selected economically poor and educationally backward counties, the program package is to facilitate the achievement of the goal of the UPE by the end of year 2000. Specific strategies are to intensify the efforts to upgrade the qualifications and professional competence of those in-service teachers who do not meet the state-prescribed qualifications, to enhance in-service training opportunities for all teachers to equip them with new curriculum and instructional materials reflecting local needs and environmental contexts, and to train teachers of multi-grade classes and to train adequate number of teachers for bilingual instruction in minority areas.[89] Different from the previous cycles, most of the budget has been spent on software activities.

An internal consultancy will be commissioned to undertake project evaluation, which will begin in mid 2000, and the final report of this evaluation will be available at the end of this year.

[89] UNICEF, (1996) Project Plan of Action/E03/59, Beijing, p. 9.

CHAPTER FOUR

GAINS AND LOSSES: CHINA/UNICEF REPONSES TO THE ISTT PROJECT

This chapter explores the project formulation processes, which facilitates the search for the conditions conducive to the dialogical partnership and equal interaction. The Chinese national drive towards heightening the quality of the whole population through the UPE enables UNICEF to contexualize its “functional” perception of basic education as better tools for bettering people’s life, which are supported by the Chinese actors. Analysis of the interview data of 4 Chinese and 2 key UNICEF actors reveals a divergence in the detailed conceptualization of qualified teachers. The considerable similarities to the project outcomes indicate the same starting point shared by the both sides. Divergence is obvious in impediments to the project, which is, however, inevitable in any other partnership. But it is surmountable so long as the partnership is

dialogical and equal.

4.1 ISTT Project Plans of Actions and Their Formulation

4.1.1 Project Formulation Processes

Before analyzing the PPAs themselves, it is informative to identify equal interaction, by revealing the process of the PPAs' formulation, and by letting the fact speaks for itself. Apart from the 1st cycle, which had been formulated experimentally and swiftly, the formulation process of all of the other cycles relied on on-the-spot investigations and inputs of local actors and internal consultants.

It was normally half a year before the existing cycle came to its conclusion and that UNICEF's proposals for the next cycle would arrive. Rounds of negotiations between UNICEF and MOE would be held to determine the areas out of the Chinese priority lists for investment. These macro-level negotiations were followed by the finalization of the section-specific program scale. The UNICEF officers and consultants then spent several days to discuss the relevant issues with the MOE project officers. A period of needs-assessment (its time-scale depended on the numbers of the potential project regions and institutions involved) was jointly conducted by MOE staff and UNICEF-sponsored consultants based on the inputs of local educational administrators,

teachers and community members and on-the-spot investigations. This would result in 2 reports respectively from UNICEF and the consultants, which served as guidelines for further mutual discussions until the consensus was reached. The draft PPAs were written in Beijing by the UNICEF-sponsored consultants and would be sent to MOE for acceptance before they were sent to UNICEF for approval.[90] Once approved, the PPAs were finalized and project activity began.

This consultation process of the PPAs showed that UNICEF tried to put its investment in the Chinese context by following the Chinese priorities. The PPAs were formulated primarily based on the inputs and opinions of the MOE project officers, the UNICEF consultants, the administrators at provincial and county levels, the training school/center teachers and the related community members. This process also indicated that the dominant actors both from the UNICEF and Chinese sides were keen to determine the investment in key areas by hearing on their own and seeing on the spot, to accommodate the local needs which, in turn, would promote the accomplishment of the national priorities.

4.2 Comparison between Interview Responses of the Chinese and

[90] All the draft PPAs were approved, except that of the 1st cycle was redrafted.

UNICEF Project Actors

As mentioned in Chapter One, prior to this research, I initially aimed to explore the general nature of gains and losses without analyzing the sort of issues affecting the process of equal interaction. My exploration of the PPAs encouraged me to shift the focus of this dissertation, which was reinforced by strikingly congruent interview responses of the Chinese project actors to questions. I included an analysis of their responses with many indigenous conceptualizations, illustrating the assumptions that underwrote their actions and reflections on the impact of the project. In an attempt to identify if equal interaction perceptions were shared by UNICEF respondents, I included a brief analysis of their responses, illustrating the assumptions underpinning their actions and reflections on the impact of the project. Although there was some divergence in the conceptualization of quality education and qualified teachers, UNICEF's consciousness of contextualization and reflection of the Chinese reality rectif ied this conceptual opposition and formed the project into a concerted effort with the government.

4.2.1 Assumptions

In each interview, I did not directly question aid and development. But the

responses of the Chinese project actors to questions concerning the purpose of primary education, criteria for qualified teachers and particularly good elements in the project suggested the concepts associated with the pursuit of their contextualization in the process of accomplishment of national goals, close to those underlying in the PPAs.

Some responses from the Chinese actors emphasized the role of primary education as a vital foundation period, which was particularly important to totally 200 million students of different levels in China. What was most strikingly congruent in the responses was the emphasis on the role of primary education in eliminating ignorance and backwardness, primarily in remote and minority areas, and therefore, in promoting endogenous cultural and economic development which, in turn, could promote national development. As the previous director general of this project Mr. Wang Baizhe stated that *"The purpose of primary education is to lay a good foundation. Its particular important role lies in the fact that lower quality of population in rural and remote areas constitutes the largest obstacle to the UPE and the overall educational development."*

His conceptualization was reminiscent of the PPAs, reflecting the consciousness of the real problem in fulfilling the development of primary education in China. Related to this response, Mr. Wang problematised the existing parameters primarily pursuing the promotion to higher level of education, rather than accommodating the local life and

professional needs.

The responses of the 2 UNICEF senior program officers Dr. Cherry Courtney and Mr. Shao Botung to the questions suggested adherence to the concepts of development distinguished from other agencies' conceptualization. For Dr. Courtney, the purpose of primary education was *"a basic human right for people to attain better tools for bettering their lives."* While for Mr. Shao, it was *"to give people a functional and sustainable level of learning and life skills."*

Here the conceptualization did not appear similar to the Chinese ones. But the respondents' adherence to the functional role of primary education represented the coherence to the project assumptions of abandoning ignorance and backwardness through the UPE, which was the national goal of the Chinese government.[91]

Quality education largely depends on qualified teachers. No respondent questioned this relationship. Even more surprising congruence was the reference on qualified teachers in the responses not only to professional teaching skills, but also the skills in handling the moral and attitudinal development of students. The project executive director, Mr. Bao Tongzeng's description encapsulated typical Chinese perception of a good or qualified teacher: *"A good teacher is expected not only to teach*

[91] SEC, (1993), The Outline of Educational Reform and Development in China, Beijing: People's Education Press, p. 2.

well in classrooms, but also to handle moral and attitudinal development of students. A good teacher should teach by verbal instruction and personal example as well."

As 2 principal criteria for being a qualified teacher, moral cultivation and intellectual development exert a widespread influence upon people's expectation of a good teacher. This popular perception was not directly reflected in the objectives of the project. But the pursuit of reaching the state-issued prescription on teachers' certificate through training, which put moral cultivation capability as the first priority, indicated the awareness and efforts in incorporating this significant view in the project.

Given that the main problem in China did not lie in the number of teachers employed considering the teacher-student ratio, all respondents saw an urgent need for training to heighten the quality of teachers. However, Mr. Bao's view was pragmatic: "*In addition to the prioritization of teacher -- professionalism, the government emphasizes the attainment of teachers' certificates prescribed in the state-issued standards."*

A certain degree of exposure to some of the Western theories and practice such as student-centered and micro teaching methodology was clearly articulated in Mr. Bao's responses. He acknowledged, however, these only applied to the teacher training in the more developed areas. For most of the remote and minority areas, emphasis was

still put on training for the integration of attaining teachers' certificates with the contents that accommodated the local needs. This especially applied to those "Minban" teachers who were regarded either unqualified or partially qualified.

Unlike what the Chinese actors perceived to be the definition of a good teacher, Dr. Courtney expressed that improvement in teachers' performance depended on teachers being trained to play an increasingly complex role. To her, *"Teachers should be purveyors of knowledge, and agents of change as well."* This conceptualization of complex role of qualified teachers was shared and developed by Mr. Shao when he claimed that one of the objectives of training in the project was *"not only to improve teachers' pedagogical skills but also to develop some other qualities such as initiatives, sense of responsibility and ability to learn how to learn."*

These perceptions contained no reference to the moral and attitudinal domains possessed by the Chinese actors. But the frequent reference in the PPAs to the pursuit of reaching the state-issued prescription on teachers' certificates through teacher training indicated the contextualization of the project. Simultaneously, the importance of capacity building for change and sustainable development emphasized by the UNICEF actors had been integrated into the training objectives of the project, which represented the acceptance of the perception of the Chinese actors. This revealed a process of

mutual recognition and understanding of co-operation between China and UNICEF based on communication.

4.2.2 Successful Outcomes

The interview responses of the Chinese side presented an appreciation of the project, primarily with regard to quantitative and qualitative improvement in terms of facilitation of the government's drive towards the establishment of the nationwide teacher-training network. Concentration was given to the Chinese actors' participation in the project and capability building at both central and local levels.

4.2.2.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Improvement

All the responses of the Chinese actors were unanimously positive about qualitative and quantitative improvement, emphasizing the increase of training capacity of 170 project normal schools/centers directly conceived in the PPAs. Responses to the question concerning the main features of the project particularly reflected this appreciation. In Mr. Bao's view, *"The umbrella shape of training network establishment has resulted in dissemination of good experience by training trainers at lower levels, who later on act as resource trainers for training centers at even lower levels."*

This response reflected Mr. Bao's interest in the coordination-capability and efficiency-orientation of the network, pursued by the project, a conviction appreciated by the government, and shared by all the respondents.

Quantitative improvement was frequently mentioned in the responses. As the current director general of the ISTT project Mr. Zhang Xuezhong pointed out that *"Training capacity of the project schools has gained as a result of the project investment. In purely quantitative terms, the project has witnessed the annual increase in the enrollment of both pre- and in-service teachers. Up to 1998, approximately 2 million teachers of different categories have received pre- and in-service training respectively."* This view of quantitative improvement was reinforced by another senior program officer Mr. Yang Jun, in terms of increasing training capacity through strengthening school construction when he stated that "*The project shares with the government the responsibility of training for a large number of teacher contingent. The l arge amount of input in the construction of the project normal schools enables the schools to have better teaching conditions."*

The responses to the question on particularly good element of the project focused on 2 consequences: the open attitudes taken by UNICEF in decision-making and the Chinese project actors' capacity building through the involvement in

management, implementation, and evaluation.

4.2.2.2 Decision-making

The Chinese actors made much reference to the reality of intervention, which had encouraged full commitment of the Chinese project actors at different levels. Focus was directed at each level of the project decision-making process, suggesting that participants both at central and local levels perceived it much informed and appropriate. The respondents frequently referred to their own preparation and involvement which were even more than they had expected. As Mr. Bao expressed that *"The planning stage is largely based on the opinions of MOE staff, regional officers and teachers and on-site investigations. The annual PPA's formulation is even solely relied on us, especially on the local project actors, and the training school principals and teachers."* This perception was vigorously supported by Mr. Yang in his explicit example: *"I feel like a bombardment of voices from the regional project actors, especially in mid and annual summary activities. Their recommendations on improvement force us very often to recon sider and readjust the next- year plan for improvement."*

I was surprised by these answers, as they reminded me of my previous

involvement as a program officer in this project. It was quite often that the tight schedule for mid and annual year summaries kept me very busy in telephone conversations with both the local and UNICEF actors. I could assume that the respondents might have got more than the interview schedule allowed them to say about their involvement in decision-making.

4.2.2.3 Capacity Building

Although none of the responses saw teacher-training element as a part of "capacity building", they all referred to it in terms of management and evaluation. 3 of the 4 Chinese respondents expressed that one of the particularly good elements of this project was that cumulative efforts and impacts could be identified in management improvement at MOE and local levels. At the request of UNICEF, both MOE and local educational authorities prepared policy documents, statistics, matching grants and draft project proposals. The exposure of external and internal training enabled them to become more knowledgeable of teacher-training theories and practice. Their involvement in annual evaluation helped them to raise the consciousness of monitoring and evaluation, and strengthen the capability to analyze and identify the good experience to be shared and problems to be resolved. The project consultants' involvement in

evaluation displayed their better understanding of the Chinese situation and enabled the recommendations to be more relevant and feasible.

Similar to the Chinese actors, while referring to the question concerning the main features of the project, the 2 UNICEF actors' assessment of the project was also very positive, with special reference to the nationwide training system establishment. To Dr. Courtney, the teacher training in China had benefited from "*the establishment of sustainable mechanism at national and sub-national levels to provide constant training and upgrading of teachers, particularly those who are in service.*"

Although she did not elaborate the quantitative outcomes, Dr. Courtney's concentration on the impact of the nationwide teacher-training network indicated her appreciation for this initiative taken by the Chinese government and great satisfaction with UNICEF support for this initiative. This satisfaction was echoed by Mr. Shao who recognized the far-reaching impact of the change resulting from the project provision: "*It has helped to change the 'once-for-all' tradition, e.g. teachers need upgrading from time to time both by systematic training and self-learning. The project has generated sustainability of training opportunities for in-service teachers.*"

Unlike Dr. Courtney, Mr. Shao referred the teacher-training network provision to

the question concerning ‘particularly good elements’. But what was similar to Dr. Courtney was that he perceived it as a part of the main thrust of the project that had been accomplished. His compliment went further ahead with an assumption that what had been done for teacher training in the project was genuinely new and therefore a milestone in the history of the teacher training in China. This assumption had been echoed in the main agenda of the PPAs, possibly shared by other UNICEF officers too. Neither of UNICEF actors directly referred to what their Chinese counterparts had elaborated in the paradigm of capacity building. But what underpinned their responses to the 2 questions, with special appreciation for the far-reaching influence of the nationwide network upon sustainability was the assumption that this provision could result in the accomplishment of capacity building.

With reference to the main feature of the project, both of the UNICEF officers also emphasized the commitment made by the Chinese government to the project. In Mr. Shao’s words, *“I am deeply impressed by the political will and commitment from the government at different levels to universalize the primary and 9-year compulsory education. Without this, I can safely assure that this project could not have gained a satisfactory result.”* This perception was reinforced by Dr. Courtney when she referred to the advocacy and social mobilization: *“Every possible means and channel have been*

used to mobilize all the available resources to provide enough matching grants for implementing these UNICEF-assisted projects in the field of teacher training."

Despite lack of concrete figures of the government input in their responses, I am aware that it was a crucial point that the UNICEF officers were concerned about and appreciative of the project. My personal experience told me that both UNICEF and the Chinese government considered UNICEF funds as catalyst instead of educational budget. "To-go-fishing" approach was what the UNICEF officers had frequently mentioned and adopted. That was, to throw a line of UNICEF 'seed' money to catch a 'big fish' of more investment from the government into educational sector.

Referring to the compliments of the project, both the Chinese and UNICEF actors' responses emphasized the joint efforts in establishing the nationwide network of teacher training, which was regarded as the main feature of the project. As a milestone in the history of teacher training in China, both sides regarded this initiative as having a far-reaching influence upon the sustainable development.

The Chinese side put more emphasis on the quantitative improvement while the UNICEF actors concentrated on the qualitative improvement of the teacher- training network. The Chinese actors expressed more appreciation for the informed and

appropriate process of decision-making with the participation of the Chinese actors at different levels. This was perceived as the opportunities for capacity building particularly in the process of formulation, implementation and administration.

The UNICEF actors, however, emphasized more on the political will and social advocacy by the Chinese government at different levels. Their awareness of the significant role of the Chinese commitment as the main stream and the UNICEF assistance as catalyst to the project could apparently be felt in their responses.

4.2.3 Constraints Apparent in the Project Management

4.2.3.1 Within the System

When attention was directed to question 15 concerning “obstacles to the effective co-operation on the Chinese side”, Mr. Wang focused on 2 sides of the existing system: *On the one hand, in the early period of the project, the centralized system made the project administration and implementation in the hand of MOE. Given the inappropriate consideration of regional variations, the project officers at central level found themselves bogged down in everyday routines such as answering and making phone calls and working out budget. On the other hand, after the adoption of decentralization, administration and implementation of the projects were developed, to*

the extent possible, to local levels. But the administrative capability in some areas was so low that the quality of the projects could not be guaranteed."

This response indicated a puzzle about the advantages and disadvantages of decentralized system. It was echoed by Mr. Zhang and Mr. Yang, who argued that devolution of administration and implementation power to local authorities was good, considering the large regional variation in China. But it was time and resource-consuming to improve the quality of the administrations at local level. They both were conscious of the problems the local project administrators were facing in terms of lack of resources, qualified teachers, and outmoded infrastructure: *"One of the consequences of decentralization is that local governments share financial burden. Although there are many policies and subsidies in favor of remote and minority areas, they still find themselves in serious budget constraints and feel it difficult to get their administrators away for training, given the serious shortage of qualified teachers."*

This response, albeit directed at the existing problems in the Chinese educational system, also appeared to be recommendations to the project improvement, especially in terms of more appropriate styles of training.

4.2.3.2 Project Policy-making and Implementation Structure

When asked about the “obstacles to the greater impact from the UNICEF side”, some Chinese respondents described a situation in which they perceived some decisions as less appropriate and supportive to the efficiency in implementation, as what was highlighted by Mr. Bao in his words: “*Bidding policy should have been introduced in the process of equipment procurement so as to allow direct negotiations between vendors who may be offering fresh alternatives and the purchasers (especially the users) whose needs are subject to change. The present policy that all equipment, including computer, video and printing machine, are directly purchased by UNICEF through its equipment section headquarters in Copenhagen. A change should be made since computer models are upgraded almost yearly, and the existing prolonged purchasing mechanism makes the computers purchased out-of-date by their arrival date.*”

Mr. Zhang and Mr. Yang, who expressed their great concerns about the procedure of equipment procurement, which was a big percentage of the project activities, vigorously reinforced this point. They showed frustration at restrictions imposed by UNICEF on equipment procurement and complained about the high cost and inconvenience in purchasing and maintaining spare parts and consumable materials for important machines: “*The maintenance of equipment has been a constant problem.*

Inadequate funding and lack of foreign currencies has crippled the utilization of the equipment. No way is available to replace the equipment once it is out of order. Due to a long distance from Denmark to China, the obtainment of spare parts for some of the complex equipment is often delayed and entailed a long waiting time. This frequently makes very expensive equipment idle."

Although these responses were given to a specific question, I got the impression that they implied more than they had actually expressed: equipment procurement for the projects should be through international bidding instead of being monopolized by UNICEF.

Some respondents addressed the problems along with implementation structure, primarily with regard to the absence of linkage and co-ordination of teacher schools and training institutions between provinces and municipalities. Mr. Bao acknowledged that *"lines of interaction between normal schools and training institutions is more vertical than horizontal. This is a major weakness in the implementation structure."* Mr. Zhang also shared this view and went further: "*The lack of horizontal interaction between teacher-training schools of different provinces and municipalities makes it difficult to disseminate and exchange, between provinces, the lessons and practice, either good or bad."*

I was surprised by these negative responses, as I had been deeply impressed by the positive assessment from the Chinese side of the nationwide teacher-training network. But at the same time, I could not help feeling excited. Before setting out to conduct the interview, I had my own perception on the problem of lacking horizontal co-ordination and linkage, which could also be found in many other cases and sectors, but were neglected. The echo of the respondents to my own perception encouraged me to believe that, as one of the purposes of this study, co-operation between governments, different regions and institutions needed further study and improvement.

Unlike the Chinese assessment of the project, UNICEF actors were quite certain of the needs for a large degree of decentralization and more participation of the local actors in the project management and implementation. As Dr. Courtney expressed that *"The local needs could be better satisfied and more relevant when operation of the project is more decentralized."*

The focus of this response was on the fundamental improvement of the project management structure, even if it indicated the already existing degree of decentralization and relevance, which had been achieved. It also showed the fact that the huge demographic and geographic size motivated UNICEF to recognize the real needs for contexualizing the project to better accommodate the local needs, which in

turn, enhanced the effectiveness and outcomes of the project.

This reflected UNICEF's concern about the sharing of good experiences not only on a countrywide but worldwide basis, given teacher-training project as one of the few educational projects assisted by UNICEF globally. One country's good experiences might be tried out somewhere else. This process of accumulation enabled UNICEF to become enriched and more influential.[92]

There seemed to be some divergence in responses to constraints of the project made by the Chinese and UNICEF actors. While the Chinese actors expressed their uncertainty about the decentralized system in the project administration and implementation, UNICEF counterparts were quite sure of its benefits and necessity. They were more interested in the sharing of the project result rather than procurement process and after-sale service of equipment, which the Chinese side expressed more concerns about.

[92] Interview with Mr. Shao Botung, March 2000, Beijing.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

I initially started this study aiming to explore the general nature of gains and losses of the ISTT project. The in-depth analysis of the project documents and evaluation reports convinced me of shifting my focus on the exploration of equal and open attitude adopted in the partnership that made the aid relationship more constructive and productive. Hoping to ascertain the nature of partnership, I explored in detail the project characteristics and change processes. As I conducted the interviews in accordance with the principles of triangular and dialogical enlightenment of donors and recipients, the responses I received were congruent and encouraging: the frequent ascription to the open style of co-operation in all its expressions in the interview data motivated me to explore the nature of partnership further.

The Chinese practitioners placed greater emphasis on the national priorities and goals and were satisfied with their heavy involvement in the policy-making and implementation processes, while the UNICEF actors were keen on the needs of the

contexualization of the project and aware of the governmental commitment and social mobilization as the guarantee to the success of the project. All these led me to assume that the present environment in China is conducive to the expression of authentic meanings of equal and open style of partnership.

It is hoped that aid interventions aim at building the capacity of those in less developed countries, which ultimately result in their independence of aid and sustainability of their development – the fulfillment of the historic mission of aid interventions. Educational initiatives like the ISTT project have encouraged the growth of conducive and dialogical environments to the benefits of appropriateness and localization. They allowed aid recipients to share and pursue their own concerns and priorities, who also had an access to the engagement in reflection on their own undertakings.

Opportunities for dialogue between China and UNICEF made it possible for the latter as a donor to engage in reflective practice as well, preferably in conjunction with commitments from the Chinese government as a recipient. Aware that its assistance to China's teacher education would help it promote further change and development, it is wise for UNICEF to realize that this assistance would not be sufficient to maintain momentum without commitment from the Chinese government and mobilization and

support from social communities. There would often be a trade off between immediate influence on specific change programs and longer-term influence on decision processes, the latter would usually be a more difficult goal to achieve.

In terms of educational debates, although the economic arguments in favor of agency policy were considerable, the Chinese perceptions of integral and ethical ones had their own forum with the contexualization of the ISTT project provisions. This had encouraged the refinement of endogenous knowledge, the articulation of the Chinese practitioners' positions, and close association of the project initiative with local communities. This had also created an environment in which all the actors involved in the project, both UNICEF and MOE officers, local administrators, academics and teachers could function as collaborators. Such comradeship has produced desirable coutcomes which are outlined in the project documents and confirmed by the interviewees.

The project, though having its own constraints, has been a success, a judgement based on the evaluation reports available and reflection on the interview data and my own limited working experience in the project. The initiative has been well received in MOE and UNICEF alike. The Chinese teacher-training initiative has benefited considerably especially in terms of establishment and perfection of the nationwide

teacher-training network. It is a success particularly in the sense that the teacher training operates within its own system, maintaining its own characteristics while accepting what is appropriate and beneficial to its betterment. In addition, the project has to a large extent helped to equip a large number of untrained teachers who were recruited to fill up the urgent vacancies to become more competent in carrying out their duties. Furthermore, it has also helped to upgrade the quality of the trained teachers to further improve their teaching to meet the latest needs of the education system.

Given my limited experience and the small-scale interview, I hope this study wo uld be able to evaluate the equal partnership and successful initiatives of the project, although it should have been more appropriate for the majority of local project actors to reach decision of this nature. China is one of the largest and most influential developing countries, and its partnership with UNICEF has a certain extent of exemplary role and i mpacts for other developing nations as aid recipients, regardless of its uniqueness. What is more, it is hoped that it could be used for reference for aid relationship in the regional co-operation between the developed and less developed areas, which has just gained momentum in China.

Appendix

Appendix I

Key ISTT Project Actors

Chinese Side

Mr. Zhang, Xuezhong, Deputy Representative of the Chinese Government to UNESCO (1990-1996); Deputy Director general of Foreign Affairs Department of MOE (1996-1999); Director General of China/UNICEF cooperative program of education, Secretary General of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (1996-present)

Mr. Wang, Baizhe, Deputy Director General of Foreign Affairs Department of SEC (1975-1994); Director General of China/UNICEF cooperative program of education (1982-1994); Counselor at the Chinese Embassy in Britain (1994-1998); now retired

Mr. Bao, Tongzeng, Director of Teacher Education Department of SEC (1980-1998); Executive Director of China/UNICEF cooperative program in teacher training (1982-1997); now the First Secretary at the Chinese Embassy in Great Britain

Mr. Yang, Jun, Senior Program Officer of China/UNICEF cooperative program in teacher training (1987-1995); Third Secretary at the Chinese Embassy in USA (1995-1999); now Deputy Director in the International Co-operation and Exchanges Department of MOE

UNICEF Side

Dr. Cherry Courtney, Senior Program Officer of Education and Health at UNICEF Beijing Office (1982-1994)

Mr. Shao Potung, Senior Program Officer of Education and Health at UNICEF Beijing Office (1988-present)

Appendix II

List of Documentary Supporting My Reflection

China/UNICEF Project Agreement on In-service Teacher Training in Minority Areas, 1982

Project Plan of Action, 1985-1989: Pre-school Teacher Training at Normal Schools (GR/94III/002)

Project Plan of Action, 1985-1989: Primary School Teacher Training Centers (GR/84/III/003)

Project Plan of Action, 1985-1989: Special Education Teacher Training Centers (GR/84/011/017)

Project Plan of Action, 1990-1994 Program Cycle: In-service Teacher Training (E64/E32)

Project Plan of Action, 1995 Bridge Cycle: In-service Teacher Training (E64/05)

Project Plan of Action, 1996-2000: Basic Education Program for Poor Areas (E03/59)

Evaluation reports on implementation and accomplishment of the ISTT project of each cycle jointly sponsored by the Chinese government and UNICEF

Appendix III

Interview Questions

1. What do you think is the purpose of the basic education in China?
2. How do you think a qualified teacher for basic education should be?
3. How do you comment on the quality of primary and secondary school teachers in China?
4. Do you think the quality of primary and secondary school teachers should be improved? If yes, why?
5. Is UNICEF's perception of a qualified teacher similar to China's?
6. Did the ISTT project help the trainees become qualified teachers?
7. Do you think the project productive? If yes, why do you think so?
8. In your opinion, what are the main objectives of the project?
9. What are the main features of the project that have facilitated to fulfill these objectives?
10. What measures do you think the Chinese government has taken to facilitate the project?
11. What measures do you think UNCEF has taken to facilitate the project?
12. Are there changes that have taken place in the Chinese teacher training through this project?
13. Would you outline what positive impacts the project has on the Chinese teacher education?
14. Are there any negative impacts of the project on the Chinese teacher education? If yes, what are they?
15. Are there any obstacles to the effective co-operation on the Chinese side with regard to the system of organization and implementation? If yes, what are they? Can they be removed?
16. Are there any obstacles to the effective co-operation on the UNICEF side with regard to the system of organization and implementation? If yes, what are they? Can they be removed?
17. Would you outline the major challenges that China faces in relation to the teacher training? Please be specific in the spheres.
18. How do you think the perspective for the future co-operation in the field of education between China and UNICEF?
19. Is there anything else you would like to add or talk about?
20. Would you allow me to quote what you have said in my dissertation?

Appendix IV

Schedule of Interview with the Chinese and UNICEF Officials

In Beijing

Saturday Dec. 11, 1999 Interview 1

Mr. Yang, Jun, Senior Program Officer of China/UNICEF cooperative program in teacher training (1987-1995); Third Secretary at the Chinese Embassy in USA (1995-1999); now Deputy Director in the International Co-operation and Exchanges Department of MOE

Friday March 3, 2000 Interview 2

Mr. Zhang, Xuezhong, Deputy Representative of the Chinese Government to UNESCO (1990-1996); Deputy Director General of Foreign Affairs Department of MOE (1996-1999); Director General of China/UNICEF cooperative program of education, Secretary General of the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (1996-present)

Sunday March 5, 2000 Interview 3

Mr. Wang, Baizhe, Deputy Director General of Foreign Affairs Department of SEC (1975-1994); Director General of China/UNICEF cooperative program of education (1982-1994); Counselor at the Chinese Embassy in Britain (1994-1998); now retired

Thursday March 7, 2000 Interview 4

Mr. Shao Potung, Senior Program Officer of Education and Health at UNICEF Beijing Office (1988-present)

Via E-mail

Friday February 18, 2000 Interview 5

Mr. Bao, Tongzeng, Director of Teacher Education Department of SEC (1980-1998); Executive Director of China/UNICEF cooperative program

in teacher training (1982-1997); now the First Secretary at the Chinese Embassy in Britain

Wednesday April 12, 2000 Interview 6

Dr. Cherry Courtney, Senior Program Officer of Education and Health at UNICEF Beijing Office (1982-1994); now retired

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